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ALLEGORIAL REPRESENTATION OF NAPOLEON CROSSING THE ALPS

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# RECOLLECTIONS
OF
# THE PRIVATE LIFE
OF
# NAPOLEON

BY

CONSTANT
PREMIER VALET DE CHAMBRE

TRANSLATED BY WALTER CLARK

VOLUME III.

The Saalfield Pub. Co.
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श्रीधर शंकर मुजुमदार.

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# RECOLLECTIONS OF NAPOLEON.

## CHAPTER I.

Journey through Flanders and Holland. — M. Marchand, son of a nurse of the King of Rome. — O'Meara. — This journey of their Majesties to Holland not generally known. — Correction of *Contemporary Memoirs*. — My duty. — A little incident at Montreuil. — Napoleon crosses the stream in water up to his knees. — The joiner. — The mill-pond drawn off. — The wounded of Ratisbon. — Boulogne. — The English frigate. — The conscript's wife. — Napoleon crosses the Swine in a fisherman's boat. — The two fishers. — Act of kindness. — Marie Louise at the Brussels Theater. — Persons composing the suite on this journey. — Preparations in Holland. — Improvised stables at Amsterdam. — M. Emery quartermaster of the palace. — The mayor of the city of Breda. — Refutation of a falsehood. — Their Majesties at Brussels. — Marie Louise buys lace to the value of one hundred and fifty thousand francs. — Confiscated merchandise. — Anecdote. — The court engages in smuggling. — I am accused of being a smuggler. — I defend myself against the charge. — Napoleon investigating details better suited to the duties of a *femme de chambre*. — A note injurious to me. — My *Memoirs* on the year 1814. — Arrival of their Majesties at Utrecht. — The rain and the crowd of curious people. — The review. — The addresses. — False statement in *Contemporary Memoirs*. — Perfect refinement of Napoleon. — His conduct in Holland. — The Dutch. — Amusing anecdote. — The Emperor's bedroom. — Entrance of their Majesties into Amsterdam. — Re-entering the Tuileries at night a year later. — Talma. — M. Alissan de Chazet. — Napoleon conceives the idea of the expedition to Russia. — The piano. — Visit to Saardam. — Peter the Great. — Visit to the village of Broek. — Joseph the Second. — The King of Rome's first tooth. — Singular harangue. — Departure. — Arrival at Saint-Cloud.

In September, 1811, the Emperor decided to make a journey into Flanders in company with the Empress, that



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he might personally ascertain if his orders had been carried out in all matters concerning both the civil and religious administration. Their Majesties left Compiègne on the 19th, and arrived at Montreuil-sur-Mer at nine o'clock in the evening. I accompanied the Emperor on this journey. I have read in O'Meara's *Memorial* that M. Marchand was at that time in the service of Napoleon. This is incorrect; for M. Marchand did not enter the Emperor's private service until 1814, at Fontainebleau. His Majesty at that time ordered me to select from the domestics of the service an intelligent young man to assist me in my duties near his person, since none of the ordinary *valets de chambre* were to remain on the island of Elba. I mentioned the name of M. Marchand, son of a nurse of the King of Rome, as a suitable person for the place. He was accepted by his Majesty, and from that time M. Marchand formed a part of the private service of the Emperor. He may have been on this journey to Holland; but Napoleon was not aware of it, as his duties did not bring him near his Majesty's person.

I will now relate some of the circumstances which occurred on this journey, and are not generally known to the public, and at the same time take advantage of the opportunity to refute other assertions similar to those I have just mentioned, and which I have read with surprise, sometimes mixed with indignation, in the *Contemporary Memoirs*. I deem it important that the public should have correct information as to everything pertaining to this journey, in order that light may thus be thrown on certain incidents, by means of which calumny has attacked the honor of Napoleon, and even my own. A devoted

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though humble servant of the Emperor, it is natural that I should be deeply interested in explaining all that seems doubtful, in refuting all falsehoods, and in giving minute corrections of many incorrect statements which might influence the judgment of the public concerning my master and myself. I shall fulfil this duty with perfect frankness, as I have sufficiently proved in the foregoing volumes of these *Memoirs*.

A little incident occurred at Montreuil, which I take pleasure in narrating, since it proves how carefully Napoleon examined both the fortifications and improvements being made in the towns, either by his personal orders, or from the impulse given by him to these important departments of public service. After investigating the work done in the past year on the fortifications of Montreuil, and having made a tour of all the ramparts, the Emperor returned to the citadel, whence he again emerged to visit the exterior works. An arm of the river Canche, which lies at the foot of the wall on one side of the city, intercepted his route. The whole suite set to work to construct a temporary bridge of planks and logs; but the Emperor, impatient at the delay, walked through the stream in water up to his knees. The owner of a mill on the opposite shore took his Majesty by the arm to assist him in mounting the bank, and profited by this opportunity to explain to the Emperor that his mill, being in the line of the projected fortifications, would necessarily be torn down; whereupon the Emperor turned to the engineers and said, "This brave man must be indemnified for any loss he may sustain." He then continued his rounds, and did not re-enter his carriage until he had examined everything at leisure, and

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held a long interview with the civil and military authorities of Montreuil. On the route a soldier who had been wounded at Ratisbon was presented to him; and his Majesty ordered that a present should be made him on the spot, and that his petition should be presented to him on his arrival at Boulogne on the 20th.

This was the second time Boulogne had received the Emperor within its walls. Immediately on his arrival he went on board the flotilla and held a review. As an English frigate was evidently preparing to approach in order to observe more closely what was taking place in the roadstead, his Majesty immediately sent out a French frigate under full sail against the hostile ship, whereupon the latter, taking the alarm, at once disappeared. On the 29th of September his Majesty reached Flushing, and from Flushing went to visit the fortifications at Tervueren. As he was overlooking the various works at that place, a young woman threw herself at his feet, her cheeks wet with tears, and extended a petition to the Emperor with a trembling hand. Napoleon most graciously assisted her to rise, and inquired the object of her petition. "Sire," said the poor woman between her sobs, "I am the mother of three children, whose father is conscripted by your Majesty; the children and the mother are in the deepest distress." — "Monsieur," said his Majesty to some one of his suite, "make a note of this man's name; I will make him an officer." The young woman tried to express her gratitude, but her emotion and tears prevented the utterance of a word, and the Emperor went on his way.

Another kind act marked his departure from Ostend. On leaving that town he followed the course of the Estrau,

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and as he did not care to pass through the locks, in order to cross the Swine, entered a fishing-boat in company with the Duke of Vicenza, his grand equerry, Count Lobau, one of his *aides-de-camp*, and two chasseurs of the guard. This boat, which was owned by two poor fishermen, was worth only about one hundred and fifty florins,[1] including its equipment, and was their only source of wealth. The crossing required about half an hour, and his Majesty alighted at Fort Orange, on the island of Cadsand, where the prefect with his suite awaited him; and as he was wet and suffering with the cold, a large fire was kindled, by which he warmed himself with evident enjoyment. The fishermen were then asked how much they charged for the passage, and upon their replying a florin for each passenger, Napoleon ordered that a hundred napoleons[2] should be counted out to them, and they should be granted a pension of three hundred francs for life. It is impossible to give an idea of the joyful surprise of these poor men, who had not in the least suspected the exalted rank of their passenger; but no sooner were they informed than the whole country was told, and thus many hearts were won for Napoleon; while at the same time the Empress Marie Louise was being welcomed on his account at the theater, and whenever she appeared on the streets, with sincere and vociferous applause.

Preparations had been made everywhere in Holland two months before the arrival of their Majesties, in order that they might be suitably received; and there was no village on the Emperor's route so small that it was not eager to earn his approbation by the proportional magnificence of

[1] About $60. — TRANS. [2] About $400. — TRANS.

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the welcome accorded his Majesty. Almost the whole court of France accompanied him on this journey, and grand dignitaries, ladies of honor, superior officers, *aides-de-camp*, chamberlains, equerries, ladies of attire, quartermasters, *valets de chambre*, regulators of soldiers' quarters, the kitchen service — nothing was wanting. Napoleon intended to dazzle the eyes of the good Dutchmen by the magnificence of his court; and, in truth, his gracious manner, his affability, and the recital of the numerous benefits he scattered around his path, had already had their effect in conquering this population, in spite of the frowning brows of a few, who, as they smoked their pipes, murmured against the impediments to commerce caused by the Continental system.

The city of Amsterdam, where the Emperor had decided to remain some time, found itself suddenly in a condition of peculiar embarrassment, owing to the following circumstance: This town had a very extensive palace, but no coaches nor stables attached to them, which for the suite of Napoleon was a prime necessity; and the stables of King Louis, besides their insufficiency, were placed too far from the palace to be occupied by even a portion of the Emperor's service. Consequently there was great embarrassment in the city, and much difficulty was experienced in quartering the Emperor's horses; since to improvise stables in a few days, almost in a moment, was impossible, and to build carriage-houses in the midst of courts would have had a ludicrous effect. But fortunately this difficult situation was ended by one of the quartermasters of the palace named M. Emery, a man of great intelligence, and an old soldier, who, having learned from Napoleon and the force of

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circumstances never to be overcome by difficulties, conceived the happy thought of converting the flower-market into stables and coach-houses, and placing the equipages of the Emperor there under immense tents.

I have read in *Contemporary Memoirs* an anecdote to which it is my duty to give a formal contradiction, as follows: —

"The controller of the service who preceded their Majesties received from the mayor of the city of Breda a refusal to place at his disposal certain things necessary to carry out his orders. The mayor, who was entirely devoted to the English party, and by no means overjoyed at this visit of the new sovereign, would do absolutely nothing towards Napoleon's reception; and the controller was about to have recourse to the law, when the leading men of the town obtained from their first magistrate a courtesy which policy rendered imperative. On the next day the mayor was obliged in his official capacity to congratulate the Emperor on his arrival. Napoleon was on horseback; and the mayor, disguising his political sentiments, pompously delivered his municipal harangue on presenting the keys of the city. The Emperor, who was well aware of the political opinions of the mayor of Breda, said to him very cavalierly, while administering a kick to the plate on which the keys lay, which sent them off on the ground, 'Stand back! keep your keys to open the gates to your dear friends, the English; as for me, I have no difficulty in entering your town, where I am already master.'"

This anecdote is false in every particular. The Emperor, though sometimes abrupt in his manner, never lowered his dignity by conduct so strange, and I might add so ridiculous. This may appear an amusing invention to the author of those memoirs, but I must confess that it seems to me to contain as little probability as wit.

The Emperor at last rejoined his august spouse at Brussels, where the enthusiasm excited by his presence was

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unanimous. On a suggestion from him, which was as delicate as politic, Marie Louise during her stay bought laces to the value of one hundred and fifty thousand francs, in order to encourage the manufacturers. The introduction into France of English merchandise was at that time severely prohibited, and all that was found was indiscriminately burned.

Of the whole system of offensive policy maintained by Napoleon against the maritime tyranny of England, nothing more nearly aroused open opposition than the vigorous observance of prohibitory decrees. Belgium then contained a quantity of English merchandise, which was most carefully concealed, and which every one was anxious to obtain, as is ever the case with *forbidden fruit*. All the ladies in the suite of the Empress made large purchases of these articles; and one even filled several carriages with them, not without fear, however, that Napoleon might be informed of this, and might seize everything on its arrival in France. These carriages, bearing the arms of the Emperor, passed the Rhine filled with this precious luggage, and arrived at the gates of Coblentz, which furnished an occasion of painful uncertainty to the officers of the custom-house, while they deliberated whether they should arrest and examine the carriages, or should permit a convoy to pass unmolested because it professed to belong to the Emperor. After mature deliberation, the majority adopted this alternative; and the carriages successfully passed the first line of French custom-houses, and reached port in safety, — that is to say, Paris, — with its cargo of prohibited merchandise. If the carriages had been stopped, it is probable that Napoleon would have highly applauded the courage of the inspectors of cus-

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toms, and would have pitilessly burned the confiscated articles.

On the subject of confiscated goods, I find in *Contemporary Memoirs* a new anecdote, which appears to me, like the first, a story simply invented to amuse. It is a matter of much importance to me to call attention to this fictitious anecdote, in which I am made to play a part entirely foreign to my character, and, as a result, incur a disgrace which has never befallen me; and however much it may cost me to inform the public of what concerns myself alone, I feel that I owe it to truth to explicitly deny assertions which might prejudice the judgment of the reader, not only in regard to my own conduct, but also in regard to Napoleon, whose character is altogether misrepresented by many circumstances detailed in these remarkable *Memoirs*.

"Marie Louise, it is said, without the knowledge of the Emperor, endeavored to obtain for her own use English manufactures; and, in order to accomplish this, a lady of attire used the services of the keenest and sharpest children of Jacob she could find, who made her pay fivefold for all that she bought, in order to indemnify themselves for the danger they incurred in thus openly disobeying the orders of Napoleon under his very eyes.

"Constant, first *valet de chambre* of the Emperor, although he well knew that his master abhorred everything which came from England, nevertheless had the indiscretion to purchase articles manufactured there. The Emperor was informed of this, and immediately gave orders to the grand chamberlain and grand marshal to send this smuggler back to France, and dismiss him from his service. Constant, who knew that Marie Louise committed the same frauds, solicited her kind services to obtain his pardon from Napoleon; and, in granting it, Napoleon declared that in the future he would hang to the foremast of the first vessel in the roads whoever dared to infringe his orders."

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All which is an entire falsehood from beginning to end. Is it reasonable to suppose that Marie Louise would seek by underhand means to obtain English goods, knowing what a horror the Emperor had of them? And apart from the fact that the young Empress was not the woman to disobey her husband in such a manner, it would have been very difficult to keep the Emperor from knowing it, if Marie Louise had taken a fancy to dress herself in these forbidden articles; for he scrutinized carefully and closely the materials of which her toilets were composed, and sometimes even presided in person over the selections she made. Nevertheless, it did not seem in the least incompatible to see this man, who was at the height of power and so preoccupied with vast ideas, descend from his high sphere to discuss matters which usually occupy the mind of a *femme de chambre*. This arose from the fact that Napoleon so well-understood how to be at the same time the great man and the private citizen; for simplicity was as natural to him as greatness, and I never saw him out of his element in whatever position he might be placed.

As for the paragraph relating to me, I can describe it only as an unmitigated falsehood. I was never guilty of smuggling at any time, for it was suited neither to my character nor my tastes; and to have thus taken a mean advantage of my position near the Emperor to engage in shameful speculations of this kind would have been at the same time both absurd and dangerous. Being so honored by his august consideration, it would have been more worthy of condemnation in me to have disobeyed my master than in any one else; and in any event my principles would have led me to conform to the restrictions he

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imposed on all alike, even had those restrictions been sacrifices. I can, then, only give the lie explicitly to this passage in *Contemporary Memoirs*, in which the author appears to have allowed himself all the more liberty, as this anecdote being entirely the creation of his own brain, he could the more readily furnish at will all the consequent developments, and which, though very pretty, no doubt, yet lack any element of truth.

The author of these *Memoirs*, not satisfied with having invented a fabulous anecdote, and arraigning me as a smuggler, has added at the foot of the page an insulting note, in which he reproaches me for my conduct at Fontainebleau in 1814. It is said in this note, that after receiving from the Emperor a gratuity of fifty thousand francs to accompany him to the island of Elba, I disgracefully abandoned him, while others, uninfluenced by motives of interest, thought it a duty to share the fate of their dethroned sovereign. In its proper place in my *Memoirs* I shall give full details of what actually occurred in that connection, and the public can form its own judgment, for I have no reason to recoil before the truth; therefore let it suffice me at present to protest vehemently against the imputation of ingratitude, which is the only reply I shall make to the author of those *Memoirs*. I now return to my own narrative.

Their Majesties arrived at Utrecht the 6th of October, and found every house on the quays as well as the streets decorated with ribbons and garlands. The rain was falling in torrents; but this did not prevent the authorities being on foot from early in the morning, and the population filling the streets. As soon as he alighted from his car-

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riage, Napoleon, in spite of the weather, mounted his horse, and went to hold a review of several regiments stationed at the gates of Utrecht, accompanied by a numerous staff, and a large number of curious persons, most of them wet to the skin. After the review Napoleon entered the palace, where the entire deputation awaited him in an immense hall, still unfurnished, though it had been built by King Louis, and without changing his clothing gave audience to all who were eager to congratulate him, and listened with most exemplary patience to the harangues addressed to him.

Here, again, the author of *Contemporary Memoirs* has found occasion to accuse Napoleon of behavior which would have been both extremely foolish and improper.

"Napoleon," says he, "returned to his apartments, and feeling fatigued by his excursion retired to bed, although he was awaited in the dining-room where many distinguished persons were assembled, and sent word to the Empress to be seated at the table with the invited guests without him. Marie Louise went to him, and attempted to make him comprehend her embarrassing position among such perfect strangers; but Napoleon still refused, and the Empress was compelled to do the honors alone.

"The dinner was a most lugubrious affair; for the Empress could not conceal her ill humor, and the guests appeared scandalized by the Emperor's conduct. They were still more so, however, when Napoleon appeared after his nap, in a plain morning-coat and slippers."

This is followed by reflections which are very philosophical, and a quotation in verse, which I will spare the reader. This entire narrative is like the preceding, embellished with details, which it is unfortunate should be an entire loss, since the anecdote is as improbable as ridiculous; for on no

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occasion did the Emperor ever allow himself so grossly to violate the laws of propriety, and in no country would he have so gratuitously insulted the higher classes by showing such an unnecessary contempt for high functionaries invited to his table in his name. He had not only too much tact, but too much good common-sense, to forget himself on this point, above all in Holland, which country had just come under his dominion, and in which his subjects were so recently acquired; in Holland, where he had more need than anywhere else to manifest the affability which pertains to the conqueror of a subjugated population; in Holland, where he obliged himself innumerable times to make personal sacrifices, to exhaust every means, almost to use coquetry, in order to neutralize, by gaining all hearts, the grievous though unavoidable effects of his commercial measures. Is it credible that he would have been guilty of such an unnecessary act of rudeness, and that he would voluntarily have given rise to all the unfavorable interpretations of this strange conduct which would have been made? Is it credible that he would have insulted, in the person of its high functionaries, a people good, but sensitive, and so much the more suspicious of any slight, since they had been informed that a few exquisites of the court of France had ridiculed their simple manners?

Next to this anecdote, we find the following:—

"Wherever Napoleon might be, the *valet de chambre* on duty was charged to have a bath always ready; and for this purpose a kitchen boy was constantly employed in keeping the water at the exact temperature the Emperor preferred.

"While at Utrecht the Emperor occupied the bedroom of his brother Louis on the ground floor, with a bathroom adjoining. On

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the evening of his arrival, while the Emperor was asleep, this kitchen-boy, although worn out with fatigue, and wet like the others of his suite, prepared the bath, and lay down in an adjoining closet. In the night he awoke and wished to leave the room; but not being familiar with the locality, and half-asleep, encountered a small door, and turning the knob, opened it, and groped around to find an outlet; in doing this he threw over a chair, and at the sound of this noise a strong voice, which proved to be the Emperor's, and which he immediately recognized, demanded, 'Who goes there?' The boy confused by his mistake lost his head, his tongue was paralyzed; and in the darkness, knocked against and overturned other pieces of furniture while trying in vain to retire by the door through which he had entered. The Emperor repeated his demand in a still louder tone, and imagining that an effort was being made to surprise him in bed, jumped from it, armed only with the large silver watch which always hung at his head, and seized by the throat the unfortunate kitchen-boy, more dead than alive, whom Napoleon, awakened from his first sleep, suspected of at least an attempt on his life. He called, shouted, swore; and at the noise he made the *valet de chambre* on duty rushed in with a light, and found the Emperor of the French almost in a fisticuff with the poor devil, who almost choking, without daring to defend himself, was attempting to remove the hands of his adversary. To the *valet de chambre* succeeded the chamberlain on duty, then the *aide-de-camp*, the grand marshal, and a prefect of the palace, and in an instant the whole court was on foot. Before the real truth was ascertained a thousand conjectures, each more improbable than the other, were made on this affair, among which it was stated than an attempt had been made to kidnap Napoleon and to slay him, but he had strangled the assassin. The truth is, that if he had firearms he would have tried to blow out the brains of the one who awoke him in this manner, but he gave him only a few blows of the big watch with which he had armed himself for defense."

I feel a delicacy in refuting an anecdote in which a laudable desire to be amusing is so evident in every phrase. But I publish these *Memoirs* in order to reveal the truth in

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the smallest particulars; and although it has cost the author of the *Contemporary Memoirs* two pages, I must take the liberty of contradicting him by this very simple reply. In the first place, Roustan and a *valet de chambre* on duty slept in the room adjoining the Emperor's apartment, and through this room alone his apartment was entered; and in the second place, a night-lamp was always burning in his Majesty's room.

The entrance of their Majesties into Amsterdam was most brilliant. The Empress, in a chariot drawn by splendid horses, was a few hours in advance of the Emperor, who made his entry on horseback, surrounded by a brilliant staff, glittering with gold and embroideries, who advanced at a slow pace amid shouts of admiration and astonishment from the good Hollanders. Through his simple and unaffected bearing there shone a profound satisfaction, and perhaps even a natural sentiment of pride, in seeing the welcome accorded to his glory here as elsewhere, and the universal sympathy aroused in the masses by his presence alone. Drapery in three colors, which produced a very fine effect, hung from posts erected at regular intervals, and formed the decoration of the streets through which his Majesty was to pass; and he who three years later was to enter the palace of the Tuileries by night, and as a fugitive, after having with much difficulty gained admission through the gates of the château, passed then under arches of triumph, with a glory yet unsullied by defeat, and a fortune still faithful. These reminiscences are painful to me, but they recur to my mind even against my will; for no year of the Empire was marked by more *fêtes*, more triumphant entries, or more popular rejoicings, than that which preceded the disastrous year of 1812.

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Some of the actors of the French Theater at Paris had accompanied the court to Holland, and Talma there played the *rôles* of Bayard and d'Orosmane; and M. Alissan de Chazet directed at Amsterdam the performance by French comedians of a vaudeville in honor of their Majesties, the title of which I have forgotten. Here, again, I wish to refute another assertion no less false made by the author of these *Memoirs*, concerning a fictitious *liaison* between the Emperor and Mademoiselle Bourgoin. I cite the passage in question: —

"Mademoiselle Bourgoin, one of the delegates from the court of Thalia, in order to be permitted to accompany the party on this journey, had thoughtlessly succumbed to the temptation of making indiscreet revelations; even boasting aloud that she attracted the Emperor to the theater in which she played; and these boasts, which were by no means virtuous, having reached the Emperor's ears, he would no longer attend the theater. He charged Talma, for whom he had much consideration, to urge the pretty actress to be silent; and to inform her that on the slightest indiscretion she would be reconducted to France under good escort."

This by no means agrees with what his Majesty said one day in regard to this actress while at Erfurt. These words, which the author of the *Memoirs* would do well to recall, prove that the Emperor had no views in regard to her; and the most important proof of all, is the great discretion which the Emperor always exercised in regard to his amours.

During the entire passage through Holland, the Emperor showed himself cordial and affable, welcoming every one most kindly, and accosting each in a suitable manner, and at no time was he ever more amiable or anxious to

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please. He visited the manufactures, inspected dock-yards, reviewed troops, addressed the sailors, and attended the balls given in his honor in all the towns through which he passed; and amid this life of seeming pleasure and distraction, he exerted himself almost more than in the quiet, monotonous life of the camp, and was affable, gracious, and accessible to all his subjects. But in these processions, in the very midst of these *fêtes*, amid all this acclamation of whole cities rushing out to meet him, eager to serve as his escort, under these arches of triumph which were erected to him sometimes even at the entrance of an obscure village, his abstraction was deeper than ever, and his heart more oppressed with care; for his thoughts were from this time filled with the expedition to Russia. And perhaps into this amenity of manner, this friendliness, and these acts of benevolence, most of which were foreign to his character, there entered the design of lessening in advance the discontent which this expedition would produce; and perhaps in attaching all hearts to himself, in exhausting every means of pleasing, he imagined he was obtaining pardon in advance, by means of the enthusiasm of his subjects, for a war which, whatever might be the result, was to cost the Empire so much blood and so many tears.

During their Majesties' stay at Amsterdam, there was placed in the apartments of the Empress a piano so constructed as to appear like a desk with a division in the middle, and in this space was placed a small bust of the Emperor of Russia. Soon after, the Emperor wished to see if the apartments of the Empress were suitable, and while visiting them perceived this bust, which he placed under

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his arm without a word. He afterwards said to one of the ladies of the Empress, that he wished this bust removed; and he was obeyed, though this caused considerable astonishment, as it was not then known that any coolness had arisen between the two Emperors.

A few days after his arrival at Amsterdam, the Emperor made several excursions into the country, accompanied by a somewhat numerous suite. He visited at Saardam the thatched cottage which sheltered Peter the Great when he came to Holland under the name of Pierre Michaëloff to study ship-building; and after remaining there half an hour, the Emperor, as he left, remarked to the grand marshal of the palace. "That is the finest monument in Holland." The evening before, her Majesty the Empress had visited the village of Broek, which is the pride of the whole north of Holland. Almost all the houses of the village are built of wood, and are of one story, the fronts ornamented with numerous paintings in accordance with the caprice of the owners. These paintings are cared for most zealously, and preserved in a state of perfect freshness. Through the windows of clearest glass are seen curtains of embroidered China silk, and of painted muslin and beautiful India stuffs. The streets are paved with brick and very clean, and are washed and rubbed daily, and covered with fine white sand, in which various figures are imitated, especially flowers. Placards at the end of each street forbid the entrance of carriages into the village, the houses of which resemble children's toys. The cattle are cared for by hirelings at some distance from the town; and there is, outside the village, an inn for strangers, for they are not permitted to lodge inside. In front of some houses I remarked either a

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grass plot or an arrangement of colored sand and shells, sometimes little painted wooden statues, sometimes hedges oddly cut. Even the vessels and broom-handles were painted various colors, and cared for like the remainder of the establishment; the inhabitants carrying their love of cleanliness so far as to compel those who entered to take off their shoes, and replace them with slippers, which stood at the door for this singular purpose. I am reminded on this subject of an anecdote relating to the Emperor Joseph the Second. That prince, having presented himself in boots at the door of a house in Broek, and being requested to remove them before entering, exclaimed, "I am the Emperor!"—"Even if you were the burgomaster of Amsterdam, you should not enter in boots," replied the master of the dwelling. The good Emperor thereupon put on the slippers.

During the journey to Holland their Majesties were informed that the first tooth of the King of Rome had just made its appearance, and that the health of this august child was not impaired thereby.

In one of the little towns in the north of Holland, the authorities requested the Emperor's permission to present to him an old man aged one hundred and one years, and he ordered him brought before him. This more than centenarian was still vigorous, and had served formerly in the guards of the Stadtholder; he presented a petition entreating the Emperor to exempt from conscription one of his grandsons, the support of his old age. His Majesty assured him, through an interpreter, that he would not deprive him of his grandson, and Marshal Duroc was ordered to leave with the old man a testimonial of Imperial liberality. In

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another little town in Friesland, the authorities made the Emperor this singular address: "Sire, we were afraid you would come with the whole court; you are almost alone, and thereby we see you the better, and the more at our ease." The Emperor applauded this loyal compliment, and honored the orator by most touching thanks. After this long journey, passed in *fêtes*, reviews, and displays of all kinds, where the Emperor, under the guise of being entertained, had made profound observations on the moral, commercial, and military situation of Holland, observations which bore fruit after his return to Paris, and even while in the country, in wise and useful decrees, their Majesties left Holland, passing through Haarlem, The Hague, and Rotterdam, where they were welcomed, as they had been in the whole of Holland, by *fêtes*. They crossed the Rhine, visited Cologne and Aix-la-Chapelle, and arrived at Saint-Cloud early in November, 1811.

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## CHAPTER II.

Marie Louise. — Description of her. — As she appeared in public and in private. — Her relations towards the ladies of her court. — Her character. — Her sensitiveness. — Her education. — She detested idleness. — Her information on public matters. — The Emperor complains of her coolness towards the ladies of the court. — Compared with Josephine. — Marie Louise's benevolence. — Amount devoted monthly to the poor. — Napoleon touched by her benevolence. — A day spent by Marie Louise. — Her first breakfast. — Her morning toilet. — Her visits to Madame de Montebello. — She plays billiards. — Her horseback rides. — Her fondness for pastry. — Her relations towards the persons of the household. — The portrait of the Duchess de Montebello removed from the apartments of the Empress when the Emperor was at the château. — Portrait of the Emperor Francis. — The King of Rome. — His character. — His goodness. — Mademoiselle Fanny Souffiot. — The little king. — Albert Froment. — Quarrel between the little king and Albert Froment. — The woman in mourning with the little boy. — Anecdote. — Docility of the King of Rome. — His fits of anger. — Anecdote. — The Emperor and his son. — Grimaces before the glass. — The three-cornered hat. — The Emperor plays with the little king on the lawn at Trianon. — The little king in the council chamber. — The little king and the hussar. — *A king should not be afraid.* — Singular caprice of the King of Rome.

MARIE LOUISE was a very handsome woman. She had a majestic figure and noble bearing, fresh complexion, blond hair, and blue eyes full of expression; her hands and feet were the admiration of the court. Her figure was, perhaps, a trifle too stout; but she lost some of this superfluous flesh during her stay in France, though thereby she gained as much in grace and beauty. Such was her appearance. In her intercourse with those immediately around her she was affable and cordial; and the enjoyment she felt in the freedom of these conversations was depicted on her countenance,

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which grew animated, and took on an infinite grace. But when she was obliged to appear in public she became extremely timid; formal society served of itself to isolate her; and as persons who are not naturally haughty always appear so with a poor grace, Marie Louise, being always much embarrassed on reception days, was often the subject of unjust criticism; for, as I have said, her coldness in reality arose from an excessive timidity.

Immediately after her arrival in France, Marie Louise suffered from this embarrassment to a very great degree, which can be easily understood in a young princess who found herself so suddenly transported into an entirely new society, to whose habits and tastes she felt obliged to conform, and in which, although her high position must naturally attract the world to her, the circumstances of this position rendered it necessary that she should take the initiative in any advances made, a fact which explains the awkwardness of her early relations with the ladies of her court. After intimacies had been formed, and the young Empress had chosen her friends with all the abandon of her young heart, then haughtiness and constraint vanished, or reappeared only on occasions of ceremony.

Marie Louise was of a calm, thoughtful character; it took little to arouse her sensitive spirit; and yet, although easily moved, she was by no means demonstrative. The Empress had received a very careful education, her mind was cultivated and her tastes very simple, and she possessed every accomplishment.

She detested the insipid hours passed in idleness, and liked occupation because it suited her tastes, and also because in a proper employment of her time she found the

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only means of driving away ennui. I think she was, in fact, a most congenial wife for the Emperor. She was too much interested in the concerns of her own private life to ever mingle in political intrigues, and, although she was both Empress and Queen, very often was in entire ignorance of public affairs, except what knowledge she obtained from the journals. The Emperor at the end of days filled with agitation could find a little relaxation only in a quiet domestic hearth, which restored to him the happiness of family life; and, consequently, an intriguing woman or a talkative politician would have annoyed him exceedingly.

Nevertheless, the Emperor sometimes complained of the want of affability the Empress showed to the ladies of her court, and said that this excessive reserve was injurious to him in a country where the opposite extreme is most common.

This was because he was recalling the past somewhat, and thinking of the Empress Josephine, whose constant gayety was the chief charm of the court. He was necessarily struck by the contrast; but was there not some injustice at the foundation of this? The Empress Marie Louise was the daughter of an Emperor, and had seen and known only courtiers, and, having no acquaintance with any other class, knew nothing of any world outside the walls of the palace of Vienna. She arrived one fine day at the Tuileries, in the midst of a people whom she had never seen except as soldiers; and on this account the constraint of her manner towards the persons composing the brilliant society of Paris seems to me to a certain point excusable. It seems to me, besides, that the Empress was expected to show a frankness and simplicity which were entirely misplaced;

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and, by being cautioned over and over again to be natural, she was prevented from the observance of that formality so suitable on the part of the great, who should be approached only when they themselves give the signal. The Empress Josephine loved the people because she had been one of them; and in mounting a throne her expansive nature had everything to gain, for she found it was only extending her friendship among a larger circle.

Inspired by her own kind heart, the Empress Marie Louise sought to make those around her happy; and her benevolent deeds were long the subject of conversation, and, above all, the delicate manner in which they were performed. Each month she took from the sum allotted for her toilet ten thousand francs for the poor, which was not the limit of her charities; for she always welcomed with the greatest interest those who came to tell her of distresses to be alleviated. From the eagerness with which she listened to those soliciting aid, it would seem that she had been recalled suddenly to a duty; and yet it was simply an evidence that the chords of her sensitive heart had been touched.

I do not know if any one ever received from her a refusal of a demand of this sort. The Emperor was deeply touched each time that he was informed of a benevolent act of the Empress.

At eight o'clock in the morning the curtains and blinds were half opened in the apartments of the Empress Marie Louise, and the papers were handed her; after reading which, chocolate or coffee was served, with a kind of pastry called *conque*. This first breakfast she took in bed. At nine o'clock Marie Louise arose, made her morning

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toilet, and received those persons privileged to attend at this hour. Every day in the Emperor's absence, the Empress ascended to the apartment of Madame de Montebello, her lady of honor, followed by her service, composed of the chevalier of honor, and some of the ladies of the palace; and on her return to her apartments, a light breakfast was served, consisting of pastry and fruits. After her lessons in drawing, painting, and music, she commenced her grand toilet. Between six and seven o'clock she dined with the Emperor, or in his absence with Madame de Montebello, the dinner comprising only one course. The evening was spent in receptions, or at concerts, plays, etc.; and the Empress retired at eleven o'clock. One of her women always slept in the room in front of her bedroom, and it was through this the Emperor was obliged to pass when he spent the night in his wife's room.

This customary routine of the Empress was changed, however, when the Emperor was at the château; but when alone she was punctual in all her employments, and did exactly the same things at the same hours. Her personal domestics seemed much attached to her; for though cool and distant in her manner, they always found her good and just.

In the Emperor's absence the portrait of the Duchess of Montebello ornamented the Empress's room with those of the entire Imperial family of Austria; but when the Emperor returned, the portrait of the duchess was removed; and during the war between Napoleon and the Emperors of Austria and Russia, the portrait of Francis II. was removed from his daughter's room, by order of his Majesty, and was, I think, consigned to some secret spot.

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The King of Rome was a very fine child; and though he resembled the Emperor less than the son of Hortense had done, his features were an agreeable union of those of his father and mother. I never knew him except in his infancy, and what was most remarkable in him at that age was the great kindness and affection he showed to those around him. He was much devoted to a young and pretty person named Fanny Soufflot, daughter of the first lady of the bedchamber, who was his constant companion; and, as he liked to see her always well dressed, he begged of Marie Louise, or his governess, Madame the Countess of Montesquiou, any finery that struck his fancy, which he wished to give to his young friend. He made her promise to follow him to the war when he was grown, and said many charming things which showed his affectionate disposition.

There was chosen as companion for *the little king* (as he styled himself) a young child named Albert Froment, I think, the son of one of the ladies of honor. One morning as they were playing together in the garden on which the apartments of the king opened at Saint-Cloud, Mademoiselle Fanny was watching them without interfering with their games, Albert tried to take the king's wheelbarrow; and, when the latter resisted, Albert struck him, whereupon the king exclaimed, "Oh, suppose some one had seen you! But I will not tell!" I consider this a fine evidence of character.

One day he was at the windows of the château with his governess, amusing himself by looking at the passers-by, and pointing out with his finger those who attracted his attention. While standing there he saw below a woman in deep mourning, holding by the hand a little boy also

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From a Painting by H. Bellange

REVIEW OF TROOPS IN THE PLACE DU CARROUSEL, PARIS

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dressed in mourning. The little child carried a petition, which he waved from a distance to the prince, and seemed to be entreating him to receive. Their black clothing made a deep impression on the prince, and he asked why the poor child was dressed all in black. "Doubtless because his papa is dead," replied the governess, whereupon the child expressed an earnest desire to speak to the little petitioner. Madame de Montesquiou, who especially desired to cultivate in her young pupil this disposition to mercy, gave orders that the mother and child should be brought up. She proved to be the widow of a brave man who had lost his life in the last campaign; and by his death she had been reduced to poverty, and compelled to solicit a pension from the Emperor. The young prince took the petition, and promised to present it to his papa. And next day when he went as usual to pay his respects to his father, and handed him all the petitions presented to him the evening before, one alone was kept apart; it was that of his little *protégé*. "Papa," said he, "here is a petition from a little boy whose father was killed on your account; give him a pension." Napoleon was deeply moved, and embraced his son, and orders for the pension were given that day. This conduct in so young a child gives undeniable evidence of an excellent heart.

His early training was excellent; as Madame de Montesquiou had an unbounded influence over him, owing to the manner at once gentle and grave in which she corrected his faults. The child was generally docile, but, nevertheless, sometimes had violent fits of anger, which his governess had adopted an excellent means of correcting, which was to remain perfectly unmoved until

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he himself controlled his fury. When the child returned to himself, a few severe and pertinent remarks transformed him into a little Cato for the remainder of the day. One day as he was rolling on the floor refusing to listen to the remonstrances of his governess, she closed the windows and shutters; and the child, astonished by this performance, forgot what had enraged him, and asked her why she did this. "I did it because I was afraid you would be heard; do you suppose the French people would want you as their prince, if they knew that you gave way to such fits of anger?"—"Do you think they heard me?" he inquired; "I would be very sorry if they had. Pardon, *Mamma Quiou* [this was his name for her], I will not do it again."

The Emperor was passionately devoted to his son; took him in his arms every time he saw him, and jumped him up and down most merrily, and was delighted with the joy he manifested. He teased him by carrying him in front of the glass and making grimaces, at which the child laughed till he cried. While at breakfast he took him on his knee, dipped his finger in the sauce and made him suck it, and smeared his face with it; and when the governess scolded, the Emperor laughed still more heartily, and the child, who enjoyed the sport, begged his father to repeat it. This was an opportune moment for the arrival of petitions at the château; for they were always well received at such times, thanks to the all-powerful credit of the little mediator.

The Emperor in his tender moods was sometimes even more childish than his son. The young prince was only four months old when his father put his three-cornered hat on the pretty infant.

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The child usually cried a good deal, and at these times the Emperor embraced him with an ardor and delight which none but a tender father could feel, saying to him, "What, Sire, you crying! A king weeping; fie, then, how ugly that is!" He was just a year old when I saw the Emperor, on the lawn in front of the château, place his sword-belt over the shoulders of the king, and his hat on his head, and holding out his arms to the child, who tottered to him, his little feet now and then entangled in his father's sword; and it was beautiful to see the eagerness with which the Emperor extended his arms to keep him from falling.

One day in his cabinet the Emperor was lying on the floor, the king riding horseback on his knee, mounting by jumps up to his father's face, and kissing him. On another occasion the child entered the council chamber after the meeting had ended, and ran into his father's arms without paying attention to any one else, upon which the Emperor said to him, "Sire, you have not saluted these gentlemen." The child turned, bowed most gracefully, and his father then took him in his arms. Sometimes when going to visit the Emperor, he ran so fast that he left Madame de Montesquiou far behind, and said to the usher, "Open the door for me, I want to see papa." The usher replied, "Sire, I cannot do it." — "But I am the little king." — "No, Sire, I cannot open it." At this moment his governess appeared; and strong in her protection he proudly repeated, "Open the door, the king desires it."

Madame de Montesquiou had added to the prayers which the child repeated morning and evening, these words: "My God, inspire papa to make peace for the

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happiness of France." One evening the Emperor was present when his son was retiring, and he made the same prayer, whereupon the Emperor embraced him in silence, smiling most kindly on Madame de Montesquiou.

The Emperor was accustomed to say to the King of Rome when he was frightened at any noise or at his grimaces, "Come, come! a king should have no fear."

I recall another anecdote concerning the young son of the Emperor, which was related to me by his Majesty himself one evening when I was undressing him as usual, and at which the Emperor laughed most heartily. "You would not believe," said he, "the singular reward my son desired of his governess for being good. Would she not allow him to go and wade in the mud?" This was true, and proves, it seems to me, that the greatness which surrounds the cradle of princes cannot eradicate from their minds the singular caprices of childhood.

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## CHAPTER III.

The Abbé Geoffroy receives a flogging. — The Emperor's remarks on the subject. — M. Corvisart. — His candor. — He requires that his directions shall be obeyed. — The Emperor much attached to him. — M. Corvisart at the chase when the Emperor is taken with violent colic. — What results from this. — M. Corvisart's credit with the Emperor. — He speaks warmly in favor of M. de Bourrienne. — His Majesty's reply. — Cardinal Fesch. — His volubility. — An expression of the Emperor. — Orders given by his Majesty on his departure for Russia. — The Count de Lavalette. — The diamonds. — Josephine summons me to Malmaison. — She recommends to me the greatest care of the Emperor. — She makes me promise to write her. — Gives me her picture. — Reflections on the departure of the grand army. — What is my mission. — The deserter. — He is brought before the Emperor. — His name and character. — Russian discipline. — Disturbance in Moscow. — Barclay. — Kutuzoff. — The merchant class. — Kutuzoff generalissimo. — His portrait. — What becomes of the deserter. — The Emperor makes his entrance into a Russian village escorted by two Cossacks. — The Cossacks after alighting from their horses. — They drink brandy like water. — Murat. — With one sweep of his sword he repulses a horde of Cossacks. — The magicians. — Platoff. — He has a magician flogged. — Laxity of the police in the French bivouacs. — The Emperor's discontent. — His threats. — Excursion of his Majesty before the battle of the Moskwa. — Encouragement to agriculture. — The Emperor ascends the heights of Borodino. — The rain. — Vexation of the Emperor. — General Caulaincourt. — The Emperor's words. — He hardly takes time to dress. — Order of the day. — The sun of Austerlitz. — The picture of the King of Rome is brought to the Emperor. — He shows it to the officers and soldiers of the old guard. — The Emperor ill. — Death of Count Auguste de Caulaincourt. — What the Emperor says of generals who have died in the army. — The Emperor goes over the battlefield of the Moskwa. — An anecdote. — Exclamations of the Emperor during the night following the battle.

ALL the world is familiar with the name of the Abbé Geoffroy[1] of satirical memory, who drove the most popular

[1] Abbé Julien Louis Geoffroy, born at Rennes, 1743; died 1814. — TRANS.

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actors and authors of the time to desperation. This pitiless Aristarchus must have been most ardently enamored of this disagreeable profession; for he sometimes endangered thereby, not his life, which many persons would have desired earnestly perhaps, but at any rate his health and his repose. It is well, doubtless, to attack those who can reply with the pen, as then the consequences of the encounter do not reach beyond the ridicule which is often the portion of both adversaries. But Abbé Geoffroy fulfilled only one of the two conditions by virtue of which one can criticise, —he had much bitterness in his pen, but he was not a man of the sword; and every one knows that there are persons whom it is necessary to attack with both these weapons.

An actor whom Geoffroy had not exactly flattered in his criticisms decided to avenge himself in a *piquant* style, and one at which he could laugh long and loud. One evening, foreseeing what would appear in the journal of the next day, he could think of nothing better than to carry off Geoffroy as he was returning from the theater, and conduct him with bandaged eyes to a house where a schoolboy's punishment would be inflicted on this man who considered himself a master in the art of writing.

This plan was carried out. Just as the abbé regained his lodging, rubbing his hands perhaps as he thought of some fine point for to-morrow's paper, three or four vigorous fellows seized him, and conveyed him without a word to the place of punishment; and some time later that evening, the abbé, well flogged, opened his eyes in the middle of the street, to find himself alone far from his dwelling. The Emperor, when told of this ludicrous affair, was not at all amused, but, on the contrary, became very angry,

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and said that if he knew the authors of this outrage, he would have them punished. "When a man attacks with the pen," he added, "he should be answered with the same weapon." The truth is also that the Emperor was much attached to M. Geoffroy, whose writings he did not wish submitted to censure like those of other journalists. It was said in Paris that this predilection of a great man for a caustic critic came from the fact that these contributions to the *Journal of the Empire*, which attracted much attention at this period, were a useful diversion to the minds of the capital. I know nothing positively in regard to this; but when I reflect on the character of the Emperor, who wished no one to occupy themselves with his political affairs, these opinions seem to me not devoid of foundation.

Doctor Corvisart[1] was not a courtier, and came rarely to the Emperor, except on his regular visits each Wednesday and Saturday. He was very candid with the Emperor, insisted positively that his directions should be obeyed to the letter, and made full use of the right accorded to physicians to scold their negligent patients. The Emperor was especially fond of him, and always detained him, seeming to find much pleasure in his conversation.

After the journey to Holland in 1811, M. Corvisart came to see the Emperor one Saturday, and found him in good health. He left him after the toilet, and immediately went to enjoy the pleasures of the chase, of which he was exceedingly fond. He was in the habit of not announcing

[1] Jean Nicholas Corvisart-Desmarets, born in Champagne, 1755; appointed chief physician to Napoleon, 1800, and later made a baron; died 1821.—TRANS.

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where he was going, solely in order that he might not be interrupted for some slight cause, as had happened to him sometimes, for the doctor was most obliging and considerate. That day after his breakfast, which, according to custom, he had devoured rapidly, the Emperor was taken suddenly with a violent colic, and was quite ill. He asked for M. Corvisart, and a courier was dispatched for him, who, not finding him in Paris, hastened to his country house; but the doctor was at the chase, no one knew where, so the courier was obliged to return without him. The Emperor was deeply vexed, and as he continued to suffer extremely, at last went to bed, and Marie Louise came and spent a few moments with him; at last M. Yvan was summoned, and administered remedies which soon relieved the Emperor.

M. Corvisart, somewhat anxious perhaps, came on Monday instead of Wednesday; and when he entered Napoleon's room, the latter, who was in his dressing-gown, ran to him, and taking him by both ears, said, "Well, Monsieur, it seems that if I were seriously ill, I should have to dispense with your services." M. Corvisart excused himself, asked the Emperor how he had been affected, what remedies he had used, and promised always to leave word where he could be found, in order that he might be summoned immediately on his Majesty's orders, and the Emperor was soon appeased. This event was really of advantage to the doctor; for he thus abandoned a bad habit, at which it is probable his patients rejoiced.

M. Corvisart had a very great influence with the Emperor, so much so that many persons who knew him gave him the *soubriquet* of doctor of petitions; and it was very

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rarely he failed to obtain a favorable answer to his requests. Nevertheless, I often heard him speak warmly in favor of M. de Bourrienne, in order to impress upon the Emperor's mind that he was much attached to his Majesty; but the latter always replied, "No, Bourrienne is too much of an Englishman; and besides, he is doing very well; I have located him at Hamburg. He loves money, and he can make it there."

It was during the year 1811 that Cardinal Fesch came most frequently to the Emperor's apartments, and their discussions seemed to me very animated. The cardinal maintained his opinions most vehemently, speaking in a very loud tone and with great volubility. These conversations did not last more than five moments before they became very bitter, and I heard the Emperor raise his voice to the same pitch; then followed an exchange of harsh terms, and each time the cardinal arrived I felt distressed for the Emperor, who was always much agitated at the close of these interviews. One day as the cardinal was taking leave of the Emperor, I heard the latter say to him sharply, "Cardinal, you take advantage of your position."

A few days before our departure for Russia the Emperor had me summoned during the day, and ordered me to bring from the treasury the box of diamonds, and place it in his room, and not to go far away, as he had some important business for me. About nine o'clock in the evening I was again summoned, and found M. de Lavalette, director-general of the post, in the Emperor's room. His Majesty opened the box in my presence, and examined the contents, saying to me, "Constant, carry this box yourself to the count's carriage, and remain there till he ar-

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rives." The carriage was standing at the foot of the grand staircase in the court of the Tuileries; and I opened it, took my seat, and waited until half-past eleven, when M. de Lavalette arrived, having spent all this time in conversation with the Emperor. I could not understand these precautions in delivering the diamonds to M. de Lavalette, but they were certainly not without a motive.

The box contained the sword, on the pommel of which was mounted *the regent* diamond, the handle also set with diamonds of great value; the grand collar of the Legion of Honor; the ornaments, hat-cord, shoulder-piece, and buttons of the coronation robes, with the shoe-buckles and garters, all of which were of immense value.

A short time before we set out for the Russian campaign, Josephine sent for me, and I went at once to Malmaison, where this excellent woman renewed her earnest recommendations to watch most carefully over the Emperor's health and safety; and made me promise that if any accident, however slight, happened to him, I would write to her, as she was exceedingly anxious to know the real truth concerning him. She wept much; talked to me constantly about the Emperor, and after a conversation of more than an hour, in which she gave full vent to her emotions, presented me with her portrait painted by Saint on a gold snuff-box. I felt much depressed by this interview; for nothing could be more touching than to see this woman disgraced, but still loving, entreating my care over the man who had abandoned her, and manifesting the same affectionate interest in him which the most beloved wife would have done.

On entering Russia, a thing of which I speak here more

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according to the order of my reminiscences than in the order of time, the Emperor sent out, on three different roads, details of select police to prepare in advance lodgings, beds, supplies, etc. These officers were Messieurs Sarrazin, adjutant-lieutenant, Verges, Molène, and Lieutenant Pachot. I will devote farther on an entire chapter to our itinerary from Paris to Moscow.

A short time before the battle of La Moskwa, a man was brought to the camp dressed in the Russian uniform, but speaking French; at least his language was a singular mixture of French and Russian. This man had escaped secretly from the enemy's lines; and when he perceived that our soldiers were only a short distance from him, had thrown his gun on the ground, crying in a very strong Russian accent, "I am French," and our soldiers had at once taken him prisoner.

Never was prisoner more charmed with his change of abode. This poor fellow, who seemed to have been forced to take arms against his will in the service of the enemies of his country, arrived at the French camp, called himself the happiest of men in finding again his fellow-countrymen, and pressed the hand of all the soldiers with an ardor which delighted them. He was brought to the Emperor, and appeared much over-awed at finding himself in the presence of the *King of the French*, as he called his Majesty. The Emperor questioned him closely, and in his reply he declared that the noise of the French cannon had always made his heart beat; and that he had feared only one thing, which was that he might be killed by his compatriots. From what he told the Emperor it appeared that he belonged to that numerous class of men who find them-

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selves transplanted by their family to a foreign land, without really knowing the cause of their emigration. His father had pursued at Moscow an unremunerative industrial profession, and had died leaving him without resources for the future, and, in order to earn his bread, he had become a soldier. He said that the Russian military discipline was one of his strongest incentives to desert, adding that he had strong arms and a brave heart, and would serve in the French army if the general permitted. His frankness pleased the Emperor, and he endeavored to obtain from him some positive information on the state of the public mind at Moscow; and ascertained from his revelations, more or less intelligent, that there was much disturbance in that ancient capital.

He said that in the street could be heard cries of, "No more of Barclay![1] Down with the traitor! dismiss him! Long live Kutusoff!"[2] The merchant class, which possessed great influence on account of its wealth, complained of a system of temporizing which left men in uncertainty, and compromised the honor of the Russian arms; and it was thought unpardonable in the Emperor that he had bestowed his confidence on a foreigner when old Kutusoff, with the blood and the heart of a Russian, was given a

[1] Prince Michael Barclay de Tolly, born in Livonia, 1755, of Scottish extraction; distinguished himself in wars against Sweden, Turkey, and Poland, 1788 and 1794, and against the French, 1806; commanded Russian army against Napoleon in 1812, until superseded, after battle of Smolensk, by Kutusoff, and commanded the right wing at Borodino; afterwards commanded at Bautzen and Leipsic; died 1818. — TRANS.

[2] Michael Kutusoff, born 1745, served against Poles and Turks; commander-in-chief, under Emperor Alexander, at Austerlitz, 1805; succeeded Barclay de Tolly in command just before battle of Borodino; died 1813. — TRANS.

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secondary position. The Emperor Alexander had paid little attention to these energetic complaints, until at last, frightened by the symptoms of insurrection which began to be manifest in the army, he had yielded, and Kutusoff had been named generalissimo, over which important event there had been rejoicings and illuminations at Moscow. A great battle with the French was talked of; enthusiasm was at its height in the Russian army, and every soldier had fastened to his cap a green branch. The prisoner spoke with awe of Kutusoff, and said that he was an *old* man,[1] with white hair and great mustaches, and eyes that struck him with terror; that he lacked much of dressing like the French generals; that he wore very ordinary clothes — he who could have such fine ones; that he roared like a lion when he was angry; that he never started on a march without saying his prayers; and that he crossed himself frequently at different hours of the day. "The soldiers love him because they say he so much resembles Suwarrow. I am afraid he will do the French much harm," said he. The Emperor, satisfied with this information, dismissed the prisoner, and gave orders that he should be allowed the freedom of the camp; and afterwards he fought bravely beside our soldiers. The Emperor made his entrance into Gjatsk with a most singular escort.

Some Cossacks had been taken in a skirmish; and his Majesty, who was at this time very eager for information from every quarter, desired to question these savages, and for this purpose had two or three brought to his headquarters. These men seemed formed to be always on horseback, and their appearance when they alighted on the

[1] He was sixty-seven years of age. — TRANS.

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ground was most amusing. Their legs, which the habit of pressing their horses' sides had driven far apart, resembled a pair of pincers, and they had a general air of being out of their element. The Emperor entered Gjatsk, escorted by two of these barbarians on horseback, who appeared much flattered by this honor. I remarked that sometimes the Emperor could with difficulty repress a smile as he witnessed the awkward appearance made by these cavaliers from the Ukraine, above all when they attempted to put on airs. Their reports, which the interpreter of the Emperor had some difficulty in comprehending, seemed a confirmation of all his Majesty had heard concerning Moscow. These barbarians made the Emperor understand by their animated gestures, convulsive movements, and warlike postures, that there would soon be a great battle between the French and the Russians. The Emperor had brandy given them, which they drank like water, and presented their glasses anew with a coolness which was very amusing. Their horses were small, with cropped manes and long tails, such as unfortunately can be seen without leaving Paris.

It is a matter of history that the King of Naples made a most favorable impression on these barbarians. When it was announced to the Emperor one day that they desired to appoint him their hetman, the Emperor was much amused by this offer, and said jestingly that he was ready to indorse this choice of a free people. The King of Naples had something theatrical in his appearance which fascinated these barbarians, for he always dressed magnificently. When his steed bore him in front of his column, his beautiful hair disordered by the wind, as he gave those grand saber strokes which mowed down men like stubble, I can

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well comprehend the deep impression he made on the fancy of these warlike people, among whom exterior qualities alone can be appreciated. It is said that the King of Naples by simply raising this powerful sword had put to flight a horde of these barbarians. I do not know how much truth there is in this statement, but it is at least possible.

The Cossacks, in common with all races still in their infancy, believe in magicians. A very amusing anecdote was told of the great chief of the Cossacks, the celebrated Platoff. Pursued by the King of Naples, he was beating a retreat, when a ball reached one of the officers beside him, on which event the hetman was so much irritated against his magician that he had him flogged in presence of all his hordes, reproaching him most bitterly because he had not turned away the balls by his witchcraft. This was plain evidence of the fact that he had more faith in his art than the sorcerer himself possessed.

On the 3d of September, from his headquarters at Gjatsk, the Emperor ordered his army to prepare for a general engagement. There had been for some days much laxity in the police of the bivouacs, and he now redoubled the severity of the regulations in regard to the countersigns. Some detachments which had been sent for provisions having too greatly prolonged their expedition, the Emperor charged the colonels to express to them his dissatisfaction, adding that those who had not returned by the next day could not take part in the battle. These words needed no commentary.

The country surrounding Gjatsk was very fertile, and the fields were now covered with rye ready for the sickle, through which we saw here and there broad gaps made by

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the Cossacks in their flight. I have often since compared the aspect of these fields in November and September. What a horrible thing is war! A few days before the battle, Napoleon, accompanied by two of his marshals, made a visit of inspection on foot in the outskirts of the city.

On the eve of this great event he discussed everything in the calmest manner, speaking of this country as he would have done of a beautiful, fertile province of France. In hearing him one might think that the granary of the army had here been found, that it would consequently furnish excellent winter quarters, and the first care of the government he was about to establish at Gjatsk would be the encouragement of agriculture. He then pointed out to his marshals the beautiful windings of the river which gives its name to the village, and appeared delighted with the landscape spread before his eyes. I have never seen the Emperor abandon himself to such gentle emotions, nor seen such serenity manifested both in his countenance and conversation; and at the same time I was never more deeply impressed with the greatness of his soul.

On the 5th of September the Emperor mounted the heights of Borodino, hoping to take in at a glance the respective positions of the two armies; but the sky was overcast. One of those fine, cold rains soon began to fall, which so often come in the early autumn, and resemble from a distance a tolerably thick fog. The Emperor tried to use his glasses; but the kind of veil which covered the whole country prevented his seeing any distance, by which he was much vexed. The rain, driven by the wind, fell slanting against his field-glasses, and he had to dry them over and over again, to his very great annoyance.

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The atmosphere was so cold and damp that he ordered his cloak, and wrapped himself in it, saying that as it was impossible to remain there, he must return to headquarters, which he did, and throwing himself on the bed slept a short while. On awaking he said, "Constant, I hear a noise outside; go see what it is." I went out, and returned to inform him that General Caulaincourt had arrived; at which news the Emperor rose hastily, and ran to meet the general, asking him anxiously, "Do you bring any prisoners?" The general replied that he had not been able to take prisoners, since the Russian soldiers preferred death to surrender. The Emperor immediately cried, "Let all the artillery be brought forward." He had decided that in his preparations to make this war one of extermination, the cannon would spare his troops the fatigue of discharging their muskets.

On the 6th, at midnight, it was announced to the Emperor that the fires of the Russians seemed less numerous, and the flames were extinguished at several points; and some few said they had heard the muffled sound of drums. The army was in a state of great anxiety. The Emperor sprang wildly from his bed, repeatedly exclaiming, "It is impossible!"

I tried to hand him his garments, that he might clothe himself warmly, as the night was so cold; but he was so eager to assure himself personally of the truth of these statements, that he rushed out of the tent with only his cloak wrapped around him. It was a fact that the fires of the bivouac had grown paler, and the Emperor had reason for the gravest suspicions. Where would the war end if the Russians fell back now? He re-entered his tent much

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agitated, and retired to bed again, repeating many times, "We will know the truth to-morrow morning."

On the 7th of September, the sun rose in a cloudless sky, and the Emperor exclaimed, "It is the sun of Austerlitz!" These words of the Emperor were reported to the army, and repeated by them amid great enthusiasm. The drums were beaten, and the order of the day was read as follows: —

SOLDIERS, — Behold the battle you have so long desired! Henceforth that victory depends on you which is so necessary to us, since it will furnish us abundant provisions, good winter quarters, and a prompt return to our native land. Conduct yourselves as at Austerlitz, at Friedland, at Witepsk, at Smolensk, and let the most remote posterity refer with pride to your conduct on this day; let it be said of you, "He took part in the great battle under the walls of Moscow."

The army replied by reiterated acclamations. The Emperor, a few hours before the battle, had dictated this proclamation, and it was read in the morning to the soldiers. Napoleon was then on the heights of Borodino; and when the enthusiastic cries of the army struck his ear, he was standing with folded arms, the sun shining full in his eyes, reflected from the French and Russian bayonets. He smiled, then became more serious until the affair was terminated.

On that day the portrait of the King of Rome was brought to Napoleon. He needed some gentle emotion to divert his mind from this state of anxious suspense. He held this portrait long on his knees, contemplating it with delight, and said that it was the most agreeable surprise he had ever received, and repeated several times in a low tone, "My good Louise! This is a charming

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attention!" On the Emperor's countenance there rested an expression of happiness difficult to describe, though the first emotions excited were calm and even melancholy. "The dear child," was all that he said. But he experienced all the pride of a father and an Emperor when by his orders officers, and even soldiers, of the old guard came to see the King of Rome. The portrait was placed on exhibition in front of the tent; and it was inexpressibly touching to see these old soldiers uncover themselves with respect before this image, in which they sought to find some of the features of Napoleon. The Emperor had at this moment the expansive joy of a father who knows well that next to him his son has no better friends than his old companions in endurance and glory.

At four o'clock in the morning, that is to say one hour before the battle opened, Napoleon felt a great exhaustion in his whole person, and had a slight chill, without fever, however, and threw himself on his bed. Nevertheless, he was not as ill as M. de Ségur states. He had had for some time a severe cold that he had somewhat neglected, and which was so much increased by the fatigue of this memorable day that he lost his voice almost entirely. He treated this with the soldier's prescription, and drank light punch during the whole night, which he spent working in his cabinet without being able to speak. This inconvenience lasted two days; but on the 9th he was well, and his hoarseness almost gone.

After the battle, of every six corpses found, one would be French and five Russian. At noon an *aide-de-camp* came to inform the Emperor that Count Auguste de Caulaincourt, brother of the Duke of Vicenza, had been struck

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by a ball. The Emperor drew a deep sigh, but said not a word; for he well knew that his heart would most likely be saddened more than once that day. After the battle, he expressed his condolences to the Duke of Vicenza in the most touching manner.

Count Auguste de Caulaincourt[1] was a young man full of courage, who had left his young wife a few hours after his marriage to follow the French army, and to find a glorious death at the battle of La Moskwa. He was governor of the pages of the Emperor, and had married the sister of one of his charges. This charming person was so young that her parents preferred that the marriage should not take place until he returned from the campaign, being influenced in this decision by the fate of Prince Aldobrandini after his marriage with Mademoiselle de la Rochefoucault before the campaign of Wagram. General Auguste de Caulaincourt was killed in a redoubt to which he had led the cuirassiers of General Montbrun,[2] who had just been fatally wounded by a cannon-ball in the attack on this same redoubt.

The Emperor often said, in speaking of generals killed in the army, "Such an one is happy in having died on the field of honor, while I shall perhaps be so unfortunate as to die in my bed." He was less philosophical on the occasion of Marshal Lannes's death, when I saw him, while at breakfast, weeping such large tears that they rolled over his cheeks, and fell into his plate. He mourned deeply for

[1] Born in Department of the Somme, 1777; wounded at Marengo, 1800; general of division, 1809; killed at Borodino, Sept. 7, 1812.—TRANS.

[2] Count Louis Pierre Montbrun, born at Florensac, 1770; distinguished himself at Eckmühl and Raab, 1809; killed at Borodino, Sept. 7, 1812.—TRANS.

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Desaix, Poniatowski, and Bessières, but most of all for Lannes, and next to him Duroc.

During the whole of the battle of the Moskwa the Emperor had attacks resembling stone in the bladder. He had been often threatened with this disease unless he was more prudent in his diet, and suffered much, although he complained little, and only when attacked by violent pain uttered stifled groans. Now, nothing causes more anxiety than to hear those complain who are unaccustomed to do so; for then one imagines the suffering most intense, since it is stronger than a strong man. At Austerlitz the Emperor said, "Ordener[1] is worn out. There is only one time for military achievement in a man's life. I shall be good for six years longer, and after that I shall retire."

The Emperor rode over the field of battle, which presented a horrible spectacle, nearly all the dead being covered with wounds; which proved with what bitterness the battle had been waged. The weather was very inclement, and rain was falling, accompanied by a very high wind. Poor wounded creatures, who had not yet been removed to the ambulances, half rose from the ground in their desire not to be overlooked and to receive aid; while some among them still cried, "*Vive l'Empereur!*" in spite of their suffering and exhaustion. Those of our soldiers who had been killed by Russian balls showed on their corpses deep and broad wounds, for the Russian balls were much larger than ours. We saw a color-bearer, wrapped in his banner as a winding-sheet, who seemed to give signs of life, but he expired in the shock of being raised. The Emperor walked

[1] General Michel Ordener; born at Saint Avold, 1755, hence fifty years old at Austerlitz; died 1811.—TRANS.

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on and said nothing, though many times when he passed by the most mutilated, he put his hand over his eyes to avoid the sight. This calm lasted only a short while; for there was a place on the battlefield where French and Russians had fallen pell-mell, almost all of whom were wounded more or less grievously. And when the Emperor heard their cries, he became enraged, and shouted at those who had charge of removing the wounded, much irritated by the slowness with which this was done. It was difficult to prevent the horses from trampling on the corpses, so thickly did they lie. A wounded soldier was struck by the shoe of a horse in the Emperor's suite, and uttered a heartrending cry, upon which the Emperor quickly turned, and inquired in a most vehement manner who was the awkward person by whom the man was hurt. He was told, thinking that it would calm his anger, that the man was nothing but a Russian. "Russian or French," he exclaimed, "I wish every one removed!"

Poor young fellows who were making their first campaign, being wounded to the death, lost courage, and wept like children crying for their mothers. The terrible picture will be forever engraven on my memory.

The Emperor urgently repeated his orders for removing the wounded quickly, then turned his horse in silence, and returned to his headquarters, the evening being now far advanced. I passed the night near him, and his sleep was much disturbed; or, rather, he did not sleep at all, and repeated over and over, restlessly turning on his pillow, "Poor Caulaincourt! What a day! What a day!"

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## CHAPTER IV.

Itinerary from France to Russia. — Magnificence of the court at Dresden. — The Emperor's conversation with Berthier. — War made on England alone. — General rumor of the restoration of Poland. — Private questions of the Emperor. — Passage of the Niemen. — Arrival and sojourn at Wilna. — Enthusiasm of the Poles. — Singular coincidence of dates. — Polish deputation. — The Emperor's reply to the deputies. — Engagements made with Austria. — Hopes frustrated. — M. de Balachoff at Wilna; hopes of peace. — The Emperor first sets foot on Russian territory. — Continued retreat of the Russians. — Frightful storm. — Great desire for a battle. — The camp at Drissa abandoned. — Departure of Alexander and Constantine. — Privations of the army and first discouragements. — Peace expected as the result of a battle. — Contempt for his enemies affected by the Emperor. — Government established at Wilna. — The Russian army again retreats. — Speech of the Emperor to the King of Naples. — Plan announced but not executed. — The campaign for three years, and a prompt march forward. — The intense heat exhausts the Emperor. — Audiences *en déshabillé*. — Suspense unendurable to the Emperor. — Useless opposition of the Duke of Vicenza, the Count of Lobau, and the grand marshal. — Departure from Witepsk and arrival at Smolensk. — Remarkable buildings. — The banks of the Moskwa.

As I have announced previously, I shall endeavor to record in this chapter some recollections of events personal to the Emperor which occurred during the journey between the frontiers of France and Prussia. How sad a contrast results, alas! as we attempt to compare our journey to Moscow with that of our return. One must have seen Napoleon at Dresden, surrounded by a court of princes and of kings, to form an idea of the highest point which human greatness can reach. There more than ever elsewhere the Emperor was affable to all; fortune smiled upon him,

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and none of those who enjoyed with us the spectacle of his glory could even conceive the thought that fortune could soon prove unfaithful to him and in so striking a manner. I remember, among other particulars of our stay at Dresden, a speech I heard the Emperor make to Marshal Berthier, whom he had summoned at a very early hour. When the marshal arrived, Napoleon had not yet risen, but I received orders to bring him in at once; so that while dressing the Emperor, I heard between him and his major-general a conversation of which I wish I could remember the whole, but at least I am sure of repeating correctly one thought which struck me. The Emperor said in nearly these words: —

"I wish no harm to Alexander; it is not on Russia that I am making war, no more than on Spain; I have only one enemy, — England, and it is her I am striving to reach in Russia; I will pursue her everywhere." During this speech the marshal bit his nails, as was his constant habit. On that day a magnificent review was held, at which all the princes of the Confederation were present, surrounding their chief as great vassals of his crown.

When the various army-corps marshaled from the other side of the Elbe had advanced to the confines of Poland, we left Dresden, meeting everywhere the same enthusiasm on the advent of the Emperor. We were as a result sumptuously entertained in every place at which we halted, so anxious were the inhabitants to testify their regard for his Majesty, even in the person of those who had the honor of serving him.

At this time there was a general rumor in the army, and among the persons of the Emperor's household, that

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his intention was to re-establish the kingdom of Poland. Ignorant as I was, and from my position should naturally be, of all political matters, I heard no less than others the expression of an opinion which was universal, and which was discussed openly by all. Sometimes the Emperor condescended to ask me what I heard, and always smiled at my report, since I could not tell the truth and say anything that would have been disagreeable to him; for he was then, and I do not speak too strongly, universally adored by the Polish population.

On the 23d of June we were on the banks of the Niemen, that river already become so famous by the interview between the two Emperors, under circumstances very different from those in which they now found themselves.

The passage of the army began in the evening, and lasted for forty-eight hours, during which time the Emperor was almost constantly on horseback, so well he knew that his presence expedited matters. Then we continued our journey to Wilna, the capital of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, and on the 27th arrived in front of this town, occupied by the Russians; and it may truly be said that there, and there alone, military operations began, for up to this time the Emperor had traveled as he would have done in the departments of the interior of France. The Russians, being attacked, were beaten and fell back, so that two days after we entered Wilna, a town of considerable size, which seemed to me to contain about thirty thousand inhabitants. I was struck with the incredible number of convents and churches which are there. At Wilna the Emperor was much gratified by the demand of five or six hundred students that they should be formed into a regiment. It is

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needless to say that such solicitations were always eagerly granted by his Majesty.

We rested for some time at Wilna; the Emperor thence followed the movement of his armies, and occupied himself also with organizing the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, of which this town, as is well known, is the capital. As the Emperor was often on horseback, I had sufficient leisure to acquaint myself thoroughly with the town and its environs. The Lithuanians were in a state of enthusiasm impossible to describe; and although I have seen during my life many *fêtes*, I shall never forget the joyous excitement of the whole population when the grand national *fête* of the regeneration of Poland was celebrated, which owing either to a singular coincidence, or the calculation of the Emperor, was appointed for the 14th of July. The Poles were still uncertain as to the ultimate fate which the Emperor reserved for their country; but a future bright with hope shone before their eyes, until these visions were rudely dispelled by the Emperor's reply to the deputation from the Polish confederation established at Warsaw. This numerous deputation, with a count palatine at its head, demanded the integral re-establishment of the ancient kingdom of Poland. This was the Emperor's reply: —

"Messieurs, deputies of the Confederation of Poland, I have heard with interest what you have just said.

Were I a Pole, I should think and act as you have done, and I should have voted like you in the assembly at Warsaw; for love of country is the first virtue of civilized man.

In my position I have many opposing interests to reconcile, and many duties to fulfill. If I had reigned at the time of the first, second, or third division of Poland, I would have armed all my people to sustain you. As soon as victory permitted me to restore your

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ancient laws to your capital and to a part of your provinces, I have done so readily, without, however, prolonging a war which would have shed the blood of my subjects.

I love your nation. For sixteen years I have seen your soldiers by my side on the fields of Italy as on those of Spain.

I applaud all that you have done; I authorize the efforts you wish to make; and all that depends on me to carry out your resolutions shall be done.

If your efforts are unanimous, you may indulge the hope of forcing your enemies to recognize your rights. But in these countries, so distant and so extensive, any hope of success can be founded only on the unanimous efforts of the population which occupies them.

I have maintained the same position since my first appearance in Poland. I should add here that I have guaranteed to the Emperor of Austria the integrity of his States, and I could authorize no movement tending to disturb him in the peaceful possession of what remains to him of the Polish provinces. Let Lithuania, Samogitia, Witepsk, Polotsk, Mohilow, Wolhynia, Ukraine, and Podolia be animated by the same spirit I have seen in great Poland, and Providence will crown with success the holiness of your cause; it will recompense this devotion to your native country which has made you such an object of interest, and has obtained for you the right to my esteem and protection, on which you may rely under all circumstances."

I have thought it best to give here the entire reply of the Emperor to the deputies of the Polish confederation, as I was a witness of the effect it produced at Wilna. A few Poles with whom I was associated spoke to me of it with sorrow; but their consternation was not loudly expressed, and the air did not the less resound with cries of "*Vive l'Empereur!*" each time the Emperor showed himself in public, which is to say almost every day.

During our stay at Wilna some hopes were entertained that a new peace was about to be concluded, as an envoy had arrived from the Emperor Alexander. But these hopes

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were of short duration; and I have since ascertained that the Russian officer, M. Balochoff, fearing, like almost all of his nation, a reconciliation between the two emperors, delivered his message in such a manner as to rouse the pride of his Majesty, who sent him back after a cool reception. Everything smiled on the Emperor. He was then at the head of the most numerous as well as most formidable army he had ever commanded. On M. Balachoff's departure everything was set in order for the execution of his Majesty's plans.

When on the point of penetrating into the Russian territory, his Majesty no longer maintained his customary serenity; at least, I had occasion to remark that he was unusually silent at the hours I had the honor to approach him; and, nevertheless, as soon as his plans were made, and he had brought his troops from the other side of the Vilia, the river on which Wilna is situated, the Emperor took possession of the Russian territory with the enthusiastic ardor one would expect in a young man. One of the escort which accompanied him related to me that the Emperor spurred his horse to the front, and made him run at his utmost speed nearly a league through the woods alone, and notwithstanding the numerous Cossacks scattered through these woods which lie along the right bank of the Vilia.

I have more than once seen the Emperor much annoyed because there was no enemy to fight. For instance, the Russians had abandoned Wilna, which we had entered without resistance; and again, on leaving this town scouts announced the absence of hostile troops, with the exception of those Cossacks of whom I have spoken. I remember one

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day we thought we heard the distant noise of cannon, and the Emperor almost shuddered with joy; but we were soon undeceived, the noise was the sound of thunder, and suddenly the most frightful storm I have ever seen burst over the army. The land for a space of more than four leagues was so covered with water that the road could not be seen; and this storm, as fatal as a battle could have been, cost us a large number of men, several thousand horses, and a part of the immense equipments of the expedition.

It was known in the army that the Russians had done an immense amount of work at Drissa, where they had constructed an enormous intrenched camp; and the number of troops collected there, the considerable sums expended in the works, all gave reason to believe that the Russian army would await the French at this point; and this belief was all the more reasonable since the Emperor Alexander, in his numerous proclamations disseminated through the army, and several of which fell into our hands, boasted of conquering the French at Drissa, where (said these proclamations) we should find our grave. It was otherwise ordained by destiny; for the Russians, constantly falling back towards the heart of Russia, abandoned this famous camp of Drissa on the approach of the Emperor. I heard it said by many general officers that a great battle would have been at that time a salutary event for the French army, in which discontent was beginning to increase, first, for want of enemies to fight, and second, because privations of every kind became each day more unendurable. Whole divisions lived, so to speak, by pillage. The soldiers devastated the dwellings and cottages found at rare intervals in the country; and, in spite of the severe orders of the Em-

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peror against marauding and pillaging, these orders could not be executed, for the officers themselves lived for the most part on the booty which the soldiers obtained and shared with them.

The Emperor affected before his soldiers a serenity which he was far from feeling; and from a few detached words which I heard him pronounce in this grave situation, I am authorized to believe that the Emperor desired a battle so ardently, only in the hope that the Emperor Alexander would make him new overtures leading to peace. I think that he would then have accepted it after the first victory; but he would never have consented to retrace his steps after such immense preparations without having waged one of those great battles which furnish sufficient glory for a campaign; at least, that is what I heard him say repeatedly. The Emperor also often spoke of the enemies he had to combat with an affected disdain which he did not really feel; his object being to cheer the officers and soldiers, many of whom made no concealment of their discouragement.

Before leaving Wilna, the Emperor established there a kind of central government, at the head of which he had placed the Duke of Bassano, with the object of having an intermediate point between France and the line of operations he intended to carry on in the interior of Russia. Disappointed, as I have said, by the abandonment of the camp of Drissa by the Russian army, he marched rapidly towards Witepsk, where the greater part of the French forces were then collected: but here the ire of the Emperor was again aroused by a new retreat of the Russians; for the encounters of Ostrovno and Mohilev, although impor-

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tant, could not be considered as the kind of battle the Emperor so ardently desired. On entering Witepsk, the Emperor learned that the Emperor Alexander, who a few days before had his headquarters there, and also the Grand Duke Constantine, had quitted the army, and returned to St. Petersburg.

At this period, that is to say, on our arrival at Witepsk, the report was spread abroad that the Emperor would content himself with taking position there, and organizing means of subsistence for his army, and that he would postpone till the next year the execution of his vast designs on Russia. I could not undertake to say what his inmost thoughts were on this subject; but what I can certify is that, being in a room adjoining his, I one day heard him say to the King of Naples, that the first campaign of Russia was ended, and that he would be the following year at Moscow, the next at St. Petersburg, and that the Russian war was a three years' campaign. Had it pleased Providence that his Majesty had executed this plan, which he outlined to the King of Naples so earnestly, so many of the brave would not have laid down their lives a few months after in the frightful retreat, the horrors of which I shall hereafter describe.

During our stay at Witepsk, the heat was so excessive that the Emperor was much exhausted, and complained of it incessantly; and I have never seen him under any circumstances so oppressed by the weight of his clothing. In his room he rarely wore his coat, and frequently threw himself on his bed to rest. This is a fact which many persons can attest as well as I; for he often received his general officers thus, though it had been his custom never

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to appear before them without the uniform which he habitually wore. Nevertheless, the influence which the heat had on his physical condition had not affected his great soul; and his genius ever on the alert embraced every branch of the administration. But it was easily seen by those whose positions enabled them best to know his character that the source of his greatest suffering at Witepsk was the uncertainty whether he should remain in Poland, or should advance without delay into the heart of Russia. While he was hesitating between these two decisions he was nearly always sad and taciturn.

In this state of vacillation between repose and motion, the Emperor's preference was not doubtful; and at the end of a council where I heard it said that his Majesty met with much opposition, I learned that we were to move forward and advance on Moscow, from which it was said that we were only twenty days' march distant. Among those who opposed most vehemently this immediate march on Moscow, I heard the names cited of the Duke of Vicenza [1] and the Count of Lobau; [2] but what I can assert of my own knowledge, and which I learned in a manner to leave no room for doubt, is that the grand marshal of the palace [3] tried on numerous occasions to dissuade the Emperor from this project. But all these endeavors were of no avail against his will.

We then directed our course towards the second capital of Russia, and arrived after a few days march at Smolensk, a large and beautiful city. The Russians, whom he thought he had caught at last, had just evacuated it, after destroying much booty, and burning the greater part of the stores.

[1] Caulaincourt. [2] General Mouton. [3] Duroc. — TRANS.

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We entered by the light of the flames, but it was nothing in comparison to what awaited us at Moscow. I remarked at Smolensk two buildings which seemed to me of the greatest beauty, — the cathedral and the episcopal palace, which last seemed to form a village in itself, so extensive are the buildings, and being also separated from the city.

I will not make a list of the places with barbarous names through which we passed after leaving Smolensk. All that I shall add as to our itinerary during the first half of this gigantic campaign is that on the 5th of September we arrived on the banks of the Moskwa, where the Emperor saw with intense satisfaction that at last the Russians were determined to grant him the great battle which he so ardently desired, and which he had pursued for more than two hundred leagues as prey that he would not allow to escape him.

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## CHAPTER V.

The day after the battle of la Moskwa. — Appearance of the battlefield. — *Moscow! Moscow!* — False alarm. — Saxons returning from a raid. — The sentinel on the cry of alarm. — *Let them come, we will be ready for them.* — The glass of Chambertin wine. — The Duke of Dantzic. — Entrance into Moscow. — Silent march of the army. — The Muscovite beggars. — Reflection. — The lights are extinguished at the windows. — Lodging of the Emperor at the entrance of a faubourg. — Vermin. — Vinegar and aloes wood. — Two o'clock in the morning. — Fire breaks out in the city. — The Emperor's anger. — He threatens Marshal Mortier and the young guard. — The Kremlin. — Apartment occupied by his Majesty. — The cross of the great Ivan. — Description of the Kremlin. — The Emperor cannot sleep even a few hours. — Fire in the neighborhood of the Kremlin. — The conflagration. — The sparks. — The park of artillery under the Emperor's windows. — The Russians who keep up the fire. — Impassibility of the Emperor. — He goes out of the Kremlin. — The north staircase. — The horses rear. — The Emperor's coat and hair burned. — The postern opening on the Moskwa. — An offer is made to the Emperor by his escort to cover him with cloaks and carry him in their arms through the midst of the flames; he refuses. — The Emperor and the Prince of Eckmuhl. — Boats laden with grain are burned in the Moskwa. — Shells placed in the ovens of the houses. — Incendiary women. — The gallows. — The populace kissing the feet of the executed. — Anecdote. — The sheepskin. — The grenadiers. — The palace of Petrovskoi. — A man concealed in the room which the Emperor was expected to occupy. — The Kremlin preserved. — The orders given to Marshal Mortier. — The bivouac at the gates of Moscow. — Cashmeres, furs, and pieces of bleeding horseflesh. — The inhabitants in the cellars, and in the midst of the ruins. — Return to the Kremlin. — Despondent words of the Emperor. — The buzzards of Moscow. — Concerts at the Kremlin. — The preceptors of the Russian noblemen. — They are charged with maintaining order. — Alexander reproaches Rostopchin.

THE day after the battle of the Moskwa, I was with the Emperor in his tent which was on the field of battle, and the most perfect calm reigned around us. It was a

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fine spectacle which this army presented, calmly re-forming its columns in which the Russian cannon had made such wide gaps, and proceeding to the repose of the bivouac with the security which conquerors ever feel. The Emperor seemed overcome with fatigue. From time to time he clasped his hands over his crossed knees, and I heard him each time repeat, with a kind of convulsive movement, "*Moscow! Moscow!*" He sent me several times to see what was going on outside, then rose himself, and coming up behind me looked out over my shoulder. The noise made by the sentinel in presenting arms each time warned me of his approach. After about a quarter of an hour of these silent marches to and fro, the sentinel advanced and cried, "*To arms!*" and like a lightning flash the battalion square was formed around the Emperor's tent. He rushed out, and then re-entered to take his hat and sword. It proved to be a false alarm, as a regiment of Saxons returning from a raid had been mistaken for the enemy.

There was much laughter over this mistake, especially when the raiders came in sight, some bearing quarters of meat spitted on the ends of their bayonets, others with half-picked fowls or hams which made the mouth water. I was standing outside the tent, and shall never forget the first movement of the sentinel as he gave the cry of alarm. He lowered the stock of his gun to see if the priming was in place, shook the barrel by striking it with his fist, then replaced the gun on his arm, saying, "Well, let them come; we are ready for them." I told the occurrence to the Emperor, who in his turn related it to Prince Berthier; and in consequence the Emperor made this brave soldier drink a glass of his best Chambertin wine.

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It was the Duke of Dantzic who first entered Moscow, and the Emperor came only after him. This entry was made in the night, and never was there a more depressing scene. There was something truly frightful in this silent march of an army halted at intervals by messages from inside the city, which seemed to be of a most ominous character. No Muscovite figures could be distinguished except those of a few beggars covered with rags, who watched with stupid astonishment the army file past; and as some few of these appeared to be begging alms, our soldiers threw them bread and a few pieces of money. I cannot prevent a sad reflection on these unfortunate creatures, whose condition alone remains unchanged through great political upheavals, and who are totally without affection and without national sympathies.

As we advanced on the streets of the faubourgs, we looked through the windows on each side, and were astonished to perceive no human being; and if a solitary light appeared in the windows of a few houses, it was soon extinguished, and these signs of life so suddenly effaced made a terrible impression. The Emperor halted at the faubourg of Dorogomilow, and spent the night there, not in an inn, as has been stated, but in a house so filthy and wretched that next morning we found in the Emperor's bed, and on his clothes, vermin which are by no means uncommon in Russia. We were tormented by them also to our great disgust, and the Emperor did not sleep during the whole night he passed there. According to custom, I slept in his chamber; and notwithstanding the precaution I had taken to burn vinegar and aloes wood, the odor was so disagreeable that every moment the Emperor called me.

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"Are you asleep, Constant?" — "No, Sire." — "My son, burn more vinegar, I cannot endure this frightful odor; it is a torment; I cannot sleep." I did my best; but a moment after, when the fumes of the vinegar were evaporated, he again recommended me to burn sugar or aloes wood.

It was two o'clock in the morning when he was informed that a fire had broken out in the city. The news was received through Frenchmen residing in this country, and an officer of the Russian police confirmed the report, and entered into details too precise for the Emperor to doubt the fact. Nevertheless, he still persisted in not believing it. "That is not possible. Do you believe that, Constant? Go, and find out if it is true." And thereupon he threw himself again on his bed, trying to rest a little; then he recalled me to make the same inquiries.

The Emperor passed the night in extreme agitation, and when daylight came he knew all. He had Marshal Mortier called, and reprimanded both him and the young guard. Mortier in reply showed him houses covered with iron the roofs of which were uninjured, but the Emperor pointed out to him the black smoke which was issuing from them, pressed his hands together, and stamped his heels on the rough planks of his sleeping-room.

At six o'clock in the morning we were at the palace of the Kremlin, where Napoleon occupied the apartment of the Czars, which opened on a vast esplanade reached by a broad stone staircase. On this same esplanade could be seen the church in which were the tombs of the ancient sovereigns, also the senatorial palace, the barracks, the arsenal, and a splendid clock tower, the cross on which towers above the whole city. This is the gilded cross of

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Ivan. The Emperor threw a satisfied glance over the beautiful scene spread out before him; for no sign of fire was yet seen in all the buildings which surrounded the Kremlin. This palace is a mixture of Gothic and modern architecture, and this mingling of the two styles gives it a most singular appearance.

Within these walls lived and died the old dynasties of the Romanoff and Ruric; and this is the same palace which has been so often stained with blood by the intrigues of a ferocious court, at a period when all quarrels were settled with the poniard. His Majesty could not obtain there even a few hours of quiet sleep.

In fact, the Emperor, somewhat reassured by the reports of Marshal Mortier, was dictating to the Emperor Alexander words of peace, and a Russian flag of truce was about to bear this letter, when the Emperor, who was promenading the length and breadth of his apartment, perceived from his windows a brilliant light some distance from the palace. It was the fire, which had burst out again fiercer than ever; and as the wind from the north was now driving the flames in the direction of the Kremlin, the alarm was given by two officers who occupied the wing of the building nearest the fire. Wooden houses of many various colors were devoured in a few moments, and had already fallen in; magazines of oil, brandy, and other combustible materials, threw out flames of a lurid hue, which were communicated with the rapidity of lightning to other adjoining buildings. A shower of sparks and coals fell on the roofs of the Kremlin; and one shudders to think that one of these sparks alone falling on a caisson might have produced a general explosion, and blown up the Kremlin; for by an inconceivable

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negligence a whole park of artillery had been placed under the Emperor's windows.

Soon most incredible reports reached the Emperor; some said that Russians had been seen stirring the fire themselves, and throwing inflammable material into the parts of houses still unburned, while those of the Russians who did not mingle with the incendiaries, stood with folded arms, contemplating the disaster with an imperturbability which cannot be described. Except for the absence of cries of joy and clapping of hands they might have been taken for men who witness a brilliant display of fireworks. It was soon very evident to the Emperor that it was a concerted plot laid by the enemy.

He descended from his apartment by the great northern staircase made famous by the massacre of the Strelitz. The fire had already made such enormous progress that on this side the outside doors were half burned through, and the horses refused to pass, reared, and it was with much difficulty they could be made to clear the gates. The Emperor had his gray overcoat burned in several places, and even his hair; and a moment later we were walking over burning firebrands.

We were not yet out of danger, and were obliged to steer clear of the burning rubbish which encumbered our path. Several outlets were tried, but unsuccessfully, as the hot breezes from the fire struck against our faces, and drove us back in terrible confusion. At last a postern opening on the Moskwa was discovered, and it was through this the Emperor with his officers and guard succeeded in escaping from the Kremlin, but only to re-enter narrow streets, where the fire, inclosed as in a furnace, was

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increased in intensity, and uniting above our heads the flames thus formed a burning dome, which overshadowed us, and hid from us the heavens. It was time to leave this dangerous place from which one means of egress alone was open to us, — a narrow, winding street encumbered with *débris* of every kind, composed of flaming beams fallen from the roofs, and burning posts. There was a moment of hesitation among us, in which some proposed to the Emperor to cover him from head to foot with their cloaks, and transport him thus in their arms through this dangerous passage. This proposition the Emperor rejected, and settled the question by throwing himself on foot into the midst of the blazing *débris*, where two or three vigorous jumps put him in a place of safety.

Then ensued a touching scene between the Emperor and the Prince of Eckmuhl, who, wounded at the Moskwa, had himself borne back in order to attempt to save the Emperor, or to die with him. From a distance the marshal perceived him calmly emerging from so great a peril; and this good and tender friend by an immense effort hastened to throw himself into the Emperor's arms, and his Majesty pressed him to his heart as if to thank him for rousing such gentle emotions at a moment when danger usually renders men selfish and egotistical.

At length the air itself, filled with all these flaming masses, became so heated that it could no longer be breathed. The atmosphere itself was burning, the glass of the windows cracked, and apartments became untenable. The Emperor stood for a moment immovable, his face crimson, and great drops of perspiration rolling from his brow, while the King of Naples, Prince Eugène, and

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From a Drawing by F. Grenier

INSURRECTION IN MADRID

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the Prince de Neuchâtel begged him to quit the palace, whose entreaties he answered only by impatient gestures. At this instant cries came from the wing of the palace situated farthest to the north, announcing that the walls had fallen, and that the fire was spreading with frightful rapidity; and seeing at last that his position was no longer tenable, the Emperor admitted that it was time to leave, and repaired to the imperial château of Petrovskoi.

On his arrival at Petrovskoi the Emperor ordered M. de Narbonne to inspect a palace which I think had belonged to Catherine. This was a beautiful building, and the apartments handsomely furnished. M. de Narbonne returned with this information; but almost immediately flames burst from every side, and it was soon consumed.

Such was the fury of these wretches who were hired to burn everything, that the boats which covered the Moskwa laden with grain, oats, and other provisions, were burned, and sunk beneath the waves with a horrible crackling sound. Soldiers of the Russian police had been seen stirring up the fire with tarred lances, and in the ovens of some houses shells had been placed which wounded many of our soldiers in exploding.

In the streets filthy women and hideous, drunken men ran to the burning houses and seized flaming brands, which they carried in every direction, and which our soldiers were obliged repeatedly to knock out of their hands with the hilts of their swords before they would relinquish them. The Emperor ordered that these incendiaries when taken in the act should be hung to posts in the public squares; and the populace prostrated themselves around these gallows, kissing the feet of those executed, praying, and

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signing themselves with the sign of the cross. Such fanaticism is almost unparalleled.

One incident of which I was a witness proves that those hired to carry out this vast plot acted, evidently, according to instructions given by higher authorities. A man covered with a sheepskin, old and tattered, with a miserable cap on his head, boldly mounted the steps of the Kremlin. Under this filthy disguise an elegant costume was concealed; and when a stricter surveillance was instituted, this bold beggar himself was suspected, arrested, and carried before the police, where he was questioned by the officer of the post. As he made some resistance, thinking this proceeding somewhat arbitrary, the sentinel put his hand on his breast to force him to enter; and this somewhat abrupt movement pushing aside the sheepskin which covered him, decorations were seen, and when his disguise was removed he was recognized as a Russian officer. He had on his person matches which he had been distributing to the men of the people, and when questioned admitted that he was specially charged to keep alive the fire of the Kremlin. Many questions were asked, each eliciting new confessions, all of which were made in the most indifferent manner, and he was put in prison, and was, I think, punished as an incendiary; but of this I am not certain. When any of these wretches were brought before the Emperor, he shrugged his shoulders, and with gestures of scorn and anger ordered that they should be removed from his sight, and the grenadiers sometimes executed justice on them with their bayonets; but such exasperation can be well understood in soldiers thus driven by these base and odious measures from a resting-place earned by the sword.

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In Petrovskoi, a pretty residence belonging to one of Alexander's chamberlains, a man was found concealed in one of the apartments his Majesty was to occupy; but not being armed he was released, as it was concluded that fright alone had driven him into this dwelling. The Emperor arrived during the night at his new residence, and waited there in intense anxiety till the fire should be extinguished at the Kremlin, intending to return thither, for the pleasure house of a chamberlain was no suitable place for his Majesty. Thanks to the active and courageous actions of a battalion of the guard, the Kremlin was preserved from the flames, and the Emperor thereupon gave the signal for departure.

In order to re-enter Moscow it was necessary to cross the camp, or rather the several camps, of the army; and we wended our way over cold and miry ground, through fields where all was devastation and ruin. This camp presented a most singular aspect; and I experienced feelings of bitter melancholy as I saw our soldiers compelled to bivouac at the gates of a large and beautiful city of which they were the conquerors, but the fire still more than they. The Emperor, on appointing Marshal Mortier governor of Moscow, had said to him, "Above all, no pillage; you will answer for it with your head." The order was strictly enforced up to the moment the fire began; but when it was evident that the fire would devour everything, and that it was useless to abandon to the flames what would be of much value to the soldiers, liberty was given them to draw largely from this great storehouse of the north.

It was at once sad and amusing to see around poor plank sheds, the only tents our soldiers had, the most magnificent

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furniture, silk canopies, priceless Siberian furs, and cashmere shawls thrown pell-mell with silver dishes; and then to see the food served on these princely dishes, — miserable black gruel, and pieces of horseflesh still bleeding. Good ammunition-bread was worth at this time treble all these riches, and there came a time when they had not even horseflesh.

On re-entering Moscow the wind bore to us the insufferable odor of burning houses, warm ashes filled our mouths and eyes, and frequently we drew back just in time before great pillars which had been burned in two by the fire, and fell noiselessly on this calcined soil. Moscow was not so deserted as we had thought. As the first impression conquest produces is one of fright, all the inhabitants who remained had concealed themselves in cellars, or in the immense vaults which extend under the Kremlin; and driven out by the fire like wolves from their lairs, when we re-entered the city nearly twenty thousand inhabitants were wandering through the midst of the *débris*, a dull stupor depicted on faces blackened with smoke, and pale with hunger; for they could not comprehend how having gone to sleep under human roofs, they had risen next morning on a plain. They were in the last extremity of want; a few vegetables only remained in the gardens, and these were devoured raw, while many of these unfortunate creatures threw themselves at different times into the Moskwa, endeavoring to recover some of the grain cast therein by Rostopchin's [1] orders; and a large number perished in the water in these fruitless efforts. Such was the scene of dis-

[1] Count Feodor Rostopchin, born 1765; died 1826. He denied that Moscow was burnt by his authority. He claimed that it was burnt partly by the French, and partly by Russians without orders. — TRANS.

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tress through which the Emperor was obliged to pass in order to reach the Kremlin.

The apartments which he occupied were spacious and well lighted, but almost devoid of furniture; but his iron bedstead was set up there, as in all the châteaux he occupied in his campaigns. His windows opened on the Moskwa, and from there the fire could still be plainly seen in various quarters of the city, reappearing on one side as soon as extinguished on the other. His Majesty said to me one evening with deep feeling, "These wretches will not leave one stone upon another." I do not believe there was ever in any country as many buzzards as at Moscow. The Emperor was annoyed by their presence, and exclaimed, "*Mon Dieu!* will they follow us everywhere?"

There were a few concerts during our stay at the Emperor's residence in Moscow; but Napoleon seemed much dejected when he appeared at them, for the music of the saloons made no impression on his harassed mind, and the only kind that ever seemed to stir his soul was that of the camp before and after a battle.

The day after the Emperor's arrival, Messieurs Ed—— and V—— repaired to the Kremlin in order to interview his Majesty, and after waiting some time without seeing him, were expressing their mutual regret at having failed in this expectation, when they suddenly heard a shutter open above their heads, and, raising their eyes, recognized the Emperor, who said, "Messieurs, who are you?" — "Sire, we are Frenchmen!" He requested them to mount the stairs to the room he occupied, and there continued his questions. "What is the nature of the occupation which has detained you in Moscow?" — "We are tutors in the

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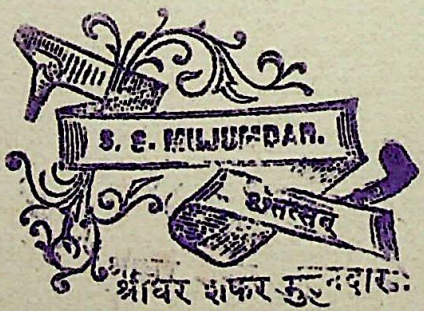
families of two Russian noblemen, whom the arrival of the French troops have driven from their homes. We have submitted to the entreaties made by them not to abandon their property, and we are at present alone in their palaces." The Emperor inquired of them if there were still other Frenchmen at Moscow, and asked that they should be brought to him; and then proposed that they should charge themselves with maintaining order, appointing as chief, M. M——, whom he decorated with a tri-colored scarf. He recommended them to prevent the pillage of the French soldiers in the churches, and to have the malefactors shot, and enjoined them to use great rigor towards the galley-slaves, whom Rostopchin had pardoned on condition that they would set fire to the city.

A part of these Frenchmen followed our army in its retreat, seeing that a longer stay at Moscow would be most disagreeable to them; and those who did not follow their example were condemned to work on the streets.

The Emperor Alexander, when informed of the measures of Rostopchin, harshly rebuked the governor, and ordered him at once to restore to liberty these unfortunate Frenchmen.

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KIRLOSKER SANGIT THEATRE
किर्लोस्कर
संगीत नाटकगृह,
पुणे.
POONA

## CHAPTER VI.

**The Muscovites asking alms. — The Emperor has food and money given them. — A day at the Kremlin. — The Emperor employs his time in municipal organization. — A theater opened near the Kremlin. — The Italian singer. — Retreat is discussed. — His Majesty prolongs his meals more than usual. — Regulations as to French comedy. — Engagement between Murat and Kutuzow. — The churches of the Kremlin stripped of their ornaments. — The reviews. — The Kremlin is blown up. — The Emperor takes the road to Smolensk. — Flocks of buzzards. — The wounded of Oupinskoë. — Each carriage in the suit carries one. — Injustice of accusations of cruelty against the Emperor. — Explosion of caissons. — Headquarters. — Cossacks. — The Emperor is informed of the conspiracy of Malet. — General Savary. — Arrival at Smolensk. — The Emperor and the commissary-general of the grand army. — The Emperor releases the Prince of Eckmuhl. — *Let us guard the safety of the Empire.* — Indefatigable activity of the Emperor. — The stragglers. — The corps of Marshal Davoust. — His rage when he finds it dying of hunger. — Marshal Ney is found. — Speech of Napoleon. — Prince Eugène weeps for joy. — Marshal Lefebvre.**

We re-entered the Kremlin the morning of the 18th of September. The palace and the hospital for foundlings were almost the only buildings remaining uninjured. On the route our carriages were surrounded by a crowd of miserable Muscovites begging alms. They followed us as far as the palace, walking through hot ashes, or over the heated stones, which crumbled beneath their feet. The poorest were barefoot; and it was a heart-rending sight to see these creatures, as their feet touched the burning *débris*, give vent to their sufferings by screams and gestures of despair. As the only unencumbered part of the street was occupied by our carriages, this swarm threw

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themselves pell-mell against the wheels or under the feet of our horses. Our progress was consequently very slow, and we had so much the longer under our eyes this picture of the greatest of all miseries, that of a people burned out of their homes, and without food or the means to procure it. The Emperor had food and money given them.

When we were again established at the Kremlin, and had resumed our regular routine of living, a few days passed in perfect tranquillity. The Emperor appeared less sad, and in consequence those surrounding him became somewhat more cheerful. It seemed as if we had returned from the campaign, and taken up again the customary occupations of city life; but if the Emperor sometimes indulged in this illusion, it was soon dispelled by the sight Moscow presented as seen from the windows of his apartments, and each time Napoleon's eyes turned in that direction it was evident that he was oppressed by the saddest presentiments, although he no longer manifested the same vehement impatience as on his first stay at the palace, when he saw the flames surrounding him and driving him from his apartments. But he exhibited the depressing calm of a careworn man who cannot foresee how things will result. The days were long at the Kremlin while the Emperor awaited Alexander's reply, which never came. At this time I noticed that the Emperor kept constantly on his table Voltaire's history of Charles XII.

The Emperor was a prey to his genius for administration, even in the midst of the ruins of this great city; and in order to divert his mind from the anxiety caused by outside affairs, occupied himself with municipal organization, and had already arranged that Moscow should be stocked with provisions for the winter.

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A theater was erected near the Kremlin, but the Emperor never attended. The troupe was composed of a few unfortunate French actors, who had remained in Moscow in a state of utter destitution; but his Majesty encouraged this enterprise in the hope that theatrical representations would offer some diversion to both officers and soldiers. It was said that the first actors of Paris had been ordered to Moscow, but of that I know nothing positively. There was at Moscow a celebrated Italian singer whom the Emperor heard several times, but only in his apartments, and he did not form part of the regular troupe.

Until the 18th of October the time was spent in discussions, more or less heated, between the Emperor and his generals, as to the best course to be pursued. Every one well knew that retreat had now become inevitable, and the Emperor was well aware of this fact himself; but it was plainly evident that it cost his pride a terrible struggle to speak the decisive word. The last days preceding the 18th were the saddest I have ever known. In his ordinary intercourse with his friends and counselors his Majesty manifested much coldness of manner; he became taciturn, and entire hours passed without any one present having the courage to begin a conversation. The Emperor, who was generally so hurried at his meals, prolonged them most surprisingly. Sometimes during the day he threw himself on a sofa, a romance in his hand which he simply pretended to read, and seemed absorbed in deep revery. Verses were sent to him from Paris which he read aloud, expressing his opinion in a brief and trenchant style; he spent three days writing regulations for the French comedy at Paris. It is difficult to understand this attention to

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such frivolous details when the future was so ominous. It was generally believed, and probably not without reason, that the Emperor acted thus from motives of deep policy, and that these regulations for the French comedy at this time, when no bulletin had yet arrived to give information of the disastrous position of the French army, were written with the object of making an impression on the inhabitants of Paris, who would not fail to say, "All cannot be going so badly, since the Emperor has time to occupy himself with the theater."

The news received on the 18th put an end to all uncertainty. The Emperor was reviewing, in the first court of the Kremlin palace, the divisions of Ney, distributing the cross to the bravest among them, and addressing encouraging words to all, when an *aide-de-camp*, young Béranger, brought the news that a sharp engagement had taken place at Winkowo between Murat and Kutusoff, and that the vanguard of Murat had been overwhelmed and our position taken. Russia's intention to resume hostilities was now plainly evident, and in the first excitement of the news the Emperor's astonishment was at its height. There was, on the contrary, among the soldiers of Marshal Ney an electric movement of enthusiasm and anger which was very gratifying to his Majesty. Charmed to see how the shame of a defeat, even when sustained without dishonor, excited the pride and aroused a desire to retrieve it in these impassioned souls, the Emperor pressed the hand of the colonel nearest to him, continued the review, and ordered that evening a concentration of all the corps; and before night the whole army was in motion towards Woronowo.

A few days before quitting Moscow, the Emperor had

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the churches of the Kremlin stripped of their finest ornaments. The ravages of the fire had relaxed the protection that the Emperor had extended to the property of the Russians.

The most magnificent trophy in this collection was the immense cross of the great Ivan. It was necessary to demolish a part of the tower on which it stood in order to take it down, and it required stupendous efforts to break this vast mass of iron. It was the Emperor's intention to place it upon the dome of the Invalides, but it was sunk in the waters of Lake Semlewo.

The evening before the Emperor was to hold a review, the soldiers were busily employed polishing their arms and putting everything in order, to conceal as far as possible the destitute condition to which they were reduced. The most imprudent had exchanged their winter clothing for provisions, many had worn out their shoes on the march, and yet each one made it a point of honor to make a good appearance on review; and when the glancing rays of the sun shone on the barrels of the well-polished guns, the Emperor felt again in witnessing this scene some slight return of the emotions with which his soul was filled on the glorious day of his departure for the campaign.

The Emperor left twelve hundred wounded at Moscow, four hundred of whom were removed by the last corps which quitted the city. Marshal Mortier was the last to go. At Feminskoë, ten leagues from Moscow, we heard the noise of a frightful explosion; it was the Kremlin which had been blown up by the Emperor's orders. A fuse was placed in the vaults of the palace, and everything arranged so that the explosion should not take place within

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a certain time. Some Cossacks came to pillage the abandoned apartments, in ignorance that a fire was smoldering under their feet, and were thrown to a prodigious height in the air. Thirty thousand guns were abandoned in the fortress. In an instant part of the Kremlin was a mass of ruins. A part was preserved, and a circumstance which contributed no little to enhance the credit of their great St. Nicholas with the Russians was that an image in stone of this saint remained uninjured by the explosion, in a spot where almost everything else was destroyed. This fact was stated to me by a reliable person, who heard Count Rostopchin himself relate it during his stay in Paris.

On the 28th of October the Emperor retraced his way to Smolensk, and passed near the battle-field of Borodino. About thirty thousand corpses had been left on this vast plain; and on our approach flocks of buzzards, whom an abundant harvest had attracted, flew away with horrible croakings. These corpses of so many brave men presented a sickening spectacle, half consumed, and exhaling an odor which even the excessive cold could not neutralize. The Emperor hastened past, and slept in the château of Oupinskoë which was almost in ruins; and the next day he visited a few wounded who had been left in an abbey. These poor fellows seemed to recover their strength at the sight of the Emperor, and forgot their sufferings, which must have been very severe, as wounds are always much more painful when cold weather first begins. All these pale countenances drawn with suffering became more serene. These poor soldiers also rejoiced to see their comrades, and questioned them with anxious curiosity concerning the events which had followed the battle of Borodino. When they learned

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that we had bivouacked at Moscow, they were filled with joy; and it was very evident that their greatest regret was that they could not have been with the others to see the fine furniture of the rich Muscovites used as fuel at the bivouac fires. Napoleon directed that each carriage of the suite should convey one of these unfortunates; and this was done, everybody complying with the order with a readiness which gratified the Emperor exceedingly; and the poor wounded fellows said in accents of most ardent gratitude, that they were much more comfortable on these soft cushions than in the ambulances, which we could well believe. A lieutenant of the cuirassiers who had just undergone an amputation was placed in the landau of the Emperor, while he traveled on horseback.

This answers every accusation of cruelty so gratuitously made against the memory of a great man who has passed away. I have read somewhere with intense disgust that the Emperor sometimes ordered his carriage to pass over the wounded, whose cries of agony made not the slightest impression on him; all of which is false and very revolting. None of those who served the Emperor could have been ignorant of his solicitude for the unfortunate victims of war, and the care he had taken of them. Foreigners, enemies, or Frenchmen, — all were recommended to the surgeon's care with equal strictness.

From time to time frightful explosions made us turn our heads, and glance behind us. They were caissons which were being exploded that we might no longer be encumbered with them, as the march became each day more painful. It produced a sad impression to see that we were reduced to such a point of distress as to be com-

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pelled to throw our powder to the winds to keep from leaving it to the enemy. But a still sadder reflection came into our minds at each detonation, — the grand army must be rapidly hastening to dissolution when the material remaining exceeded our needs, and the number of men still left was so much short of that required to use it. On the 30th, the Emperor's headquarters were in a poor hovel which had neither doors nor windows. We had much difficulty in inclosing even a corner sufficient for him to sleep. The cold was increasing, and the nights were icy; the small fortified palisades of which a species of post relays had been made, placed from point to point, marked the divisions of the route, and served also each evening as Imperial headquarters. The Emperor's bed was hastily set up there, and a cabinet arranged as well as possible where he could work with his secretaries, or write his orders to the different chiefs whom he had left on the road and in the towns.

Our retreat was often annoyed by parties of Cossacks. These barbarians rushed upon us, lance in hand, and uttering rather howls of ferocious beasts than human cries, their little, long-tailed horses dashing against the flanks of the different divisions. But these attacks, though often repeated, had not, at least at the beginning of the retreat, serious consequences for the army. When they heard this horrible cry the infantry was not intimidated, but closed ranks and presented bayonets, and the cavalry made it their duty to pursue these barbarians, who fled more quickly than they came.

On the 6th of November, before leaving the army, the Emperor received news of the conspiracy of Malet and everything connected with it. He was at first astonished,

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then much dissatisfied, and ended by making himself very merry over the discomfiture of the chief of police, General Savary; and said many times that had he been at Paris no one would have budged, and that he could never leave at all without every one losing their heads at the least disturbance; and from this time he often spoke of how much he was needed in Paris.

Speaking of General Savary recalls to my memory an affair in which he was somewhat nonplussed. After quitting the command of the gendarmerie, to succeed Fouché in the office of minister of police, he had a little discussion with one of the Emperor's *aides-de-camp*. As he went so far as to threaten, the latter replied, "You seem to think you have handcuffs always in your pockets."

On the 8th of November the snow was falling, the sky covered with clouds, the cold intense, while a violent wind prevailed, and the roads were covered with sleet. The horses could make no progress, for their shoes were so badly worn that they could not prevent slipping on the frozen ground.

The poor animals were emaciated, and it was necessary that the soldiers should put their shoulders to the wheels in order to lighten their burdens.

There is something in the panting breath which issues from the nostrils of a tired horse, in the tension of their muscles, and the prodigious efforts of their loins, which gives us, in a high degree, the idea of strength; but the mute resignation of these animals, when we know them to be overladen, inspires us with pity, and makes us regret the abuse of so much endurance.

The Emperor on foot in the midst of his household, and

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staff in hand, walked with difficulty over these slippery roads, meanwhile encouraging the others with kind words, each of whom felt himself full of good-will; and had any one then uttered a complaint he would have been badly esteemed by his comrades. We arrived in sight of Smolensk. The Emperor was the least fatigued of all; and though he was pale, his countenance was calm, and nothing in his appearance indicated his mental sufferings; and indeed they must needs have been intense to be evident to the public. The roads were strewn with men and horses slain by fatigue or famine; and men as they passed turned their eyes aside. As for the horses they were a prize for our famished soldiers.

We at last reached Smolensk on the 9th, and the Emperor lodged in a beautiful house on the Place Neuve. Although this important city had suffered since we had passed through before, it still had some resources, and we found there provisions of all kinds for the Emperor's household and the officers; but the Emperor valued but little this *privileged* abundance, so to speak, when he learned that the army needed food for man and beast. When he learned of this his rage amounted to frenzy, and I have never seen him so completely beside himself. He had the commissary in charge of the provisions summoned, and reproached him in such unmeasured terms that the latter turned pale, and could find no words to justify himself, whereupon the Emperor became still more violent, and uttered terrible threats. I heard cries from the next room; and I have been told since that the quartermaster threw himself at the feet of his Majesty, beseeching pardon, and the Emperor, when his rage had spent itself, pardoned him. Never did

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he sympathize more truly with the sufferings of his army; never did he suffer more bitterly from his powerlessness to struggle against such overwhelming misfortunes.

On the 14th we resumed the route which we had traversed a few months before under far different auspices. The thermometer registered twenty degrees, and we were still very far from France. After a slow and painful march we arrived at Krasnoi. The Emperor was obliged to go in person, with his guard, to meet the enemy, and release the Prince of Eckmuhl. He passed through the fire of the enemy, surrounded by his old guard, who pressed around their chief in platoons in which the shell made large gaps, furnishing one of the grandest examples in all history of the devotion and love of thousands of men to one. When the fire was hottest, the band played the air, "*Where can one be better than in the bosom of his family?*" Napoleon interrupted them, exclaiming, "Play rather, *Let us watch over the safety of the Empire.*" It is difficult to imagine anything grander.

The Emperor returned from this combat much fatigued. He had passed several nights without sleeping, listening to the reports made to him on the condition of the army, expediting orders necessary to procure food for the soldiers, and putting in motion the different corps which were to sustain the retreat. Never did his stupendous activity find more constant employment; never did he show a higher courage than in the midst of all these calamities of which he seemed to feel the weighty responsibility.

Between Orcha and the Borysthènes those conveyances for which there were no longer horses were burned, and the confusion and discouragement became so great that in

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the rear of the army most of the stragglers threw down their arms as a heavy and useless burden. The officers of the armed police had orders to return by force those who abandoned their corps, and often they were obliged to prick them with their swords to make them advance. The intensity of their sufferings had hardened the heart of the soldier, which is naturally kind and sympathizing, to such an extent that the most unfortunate intentionally caused commotions in order that they might seize from some better equipped companion sometimes a cloak, sometimes food. "There are the Cossacks!" was their usual cry of alarm; and when these guilty tricks became known, and our soldiers recovered from their surprise, there were reprisals, and the confusion reached its height.

The corps of Marshal Davoust was one of those which suffered most in the whole army. Of the seventy thousand men with which it left France, there only remained four or five thousand, and they were dying of famine. The marshal himself was terribly emaciated. He had neither clothing nor food. Hunger and fatigue had hollowed his cheeks, and his whole appearance inspired pity. This brave marshal, who had twenty times escaped Russian bullets, now saw himself dying of hunger; and when one of his soldiers gave him a loaf, he seized it and devoured it. He was also the one who was least silent; and while thawing his mustache, on which the rain had frozen, he railed indignantly against the evil destiny which had thrown them into thirty degrees of cold. Moderation in words was difficult while enduring such sufferings.

For some time the Emperor had been in a state of great anxiety as to the fate of Marshal Ney, who had been cut

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off, and obliged to clear for himself a passage through the midst of the Russians, who followed us on every side.

As time passed the alarm increased. The Emperor demanded incessantly if Ney had yet been seen, accusing himself of having exposed this brave general too much, asking for him as for a good friend whom one has lost. The whole army shared and manifested the same anxiety, as if this brave soldier were the only one in danger. A few regarding him as certainly lost, and seeing the enemy threaten the bridges of the Borysthènes, proposed to cut them; but the army was unanimous in their opposition to this measure.

On the 20th, the Emperor, whom this idea filled with the deepest dejection, arrived at Basanoni, and was dining in company with the Prince of Neuchâtel and the Duke of Dantzic, when General Gourgaud rushed in with the announcement that Marshal Ney and his troops were only a few leagues distant. The Emperor exclaimed with inconceivable joy, "Can it be true?" M. Gourgaud gave him particulars, which were soon known throughout the camp. This news brought joy to the hearts of all, each of whom accosted the other eagerly, as if each had found a long-lost brother; they spoke of the heroic courage which had been displayed; the talent shown in saving his corps in spite of snows, floods, and the attacks of the enemy. It is due Marshal Ney, to state here, that according to the opinion I have heard expressed by our most illustrious warriors, his safe retreat is a feat of arms to which history furnishes no parallel. The heart of our soldiers palpitated with enthusiasm, and on that day they felt the emotions of the day of victory! Ney and his division gained immortality by

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this marvelous display of valor and energy. So much the better for the few survivors of this handful of braves, who can read of the great deeds they have done, in these annals inspired by them. His Majesty said several times, "I would give all the silver in the vaults of the Tuileries to have my brave Ney at my side."

To Prince Eugène was given the honor of going to meet Marshal Ney, with a corps of four thousand soldiers. Marshal Mortier had disputed this honor with him, but among these illustrious men there were never any but noble rivalries. The danger was immense; the cannon of Prince Eugène was used as a signal, understood by the marshal, to which he replied by platoon fires. The two corps met, and even before they were united, Marshal Ney and Prince Eugène were in each other's arms; and it is said that the latter wept for joy. Such scenes make this horrible picture seem somewhat less gloomy. As far as the Beresina, our march was only a succession of small skirmishes and terrible sufferings.

The Emperor passed one night at Caniwki, in a wooden cabin containing only two rooms. The one at the back was selected by him, and in the other the whole service slept pell-mell. I was more comfortable, as I slept in his Majesty's room; but several times during the night I was obliged to pass into this room, and was then compelled to step over the sleepers worn out by fatigue. Although I took care not to hurt them, they were so close together that it was impossible not to place my feet on their legs or arms.

In the retreat from Moscow, the Emperor walked on foot, wrapped in his pelisse, his head covered with a Rus-

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sian cap tied under the chin. I marched often near the brave Marshal Lefebvre, who seemed very fond of me, and said to me in his German-French, in speaking of the Emperor, "He is surrounded by a set of —— who do not tell the truth; he does not distinguish sufficiently his good from his bad servants. How will he get out of this, the poor Emperor, whom I love so devotedly? I am always in fear of his life; if there were needed to save him only my blood, I would shed it drop by drop; but that would change nothing, and perhaps he may have need of me."

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## CHAPTER VII.

Crossing the Beresina. — The deliberations. — The eagles burnt. — The Russians have only the ashes. — The Emperor lends his own horses to draw the pieces of artillery. — The officers become simple cannoneers. — Generals Grouchy and Sebastiani. — Loud cries near Borissov. — Marshal Victor. — The two army corps. — The confusion. — Voracity of the soldiers of the retreating army. — An officer deprives himself of his uniform in order to give it to a poor soldier. — General anxiety. — The bridge. — Credulity of the army. — Gloomy conjectures. — Courage of the pontoon corps. — Floating ice. — The Emperor in a poor hut. — His deep grief. — He sheds bitter tears. — His Majesty is advised to think of saving his own person. — The enemy abandons his position. — The Emperor transported with joy. — The rafts. — M. Jacqueminot. — Count Predziecski. — The horses' breasts cut by floating ice. — The Emperor puts his hand to the wheel. — General Partonneaux. — The bridge breaks. — The cannon passes over thousands of prostrate corpses. — Horses killed with the bayonet. — Horrible scene. — Women holding their children above the water. — Striking instances of devotion. — The little orphan. — Officers harnessed to sleds. — The bridge is burned. — The cabin in which the Emperor sleeps. — The Russian prisoners. — They all perish with fatigue and hunger. — Arrival at Malodeczno. — Confidential conversation between the Emperor and M. de Caulaincourt. — Twenty-ninth bulletin. — The Emperor and Marshal Davoust. — The Emperor's intention of leaving known to the army. — His agitation on coming out from the council. — The Emperor speaks to me of his plan. — Will not permit me to go on the box of his carriage. — Impressions made on the army by the news of his departure. — Birds frozen by the cold. — The sleep which brings death. — The powder from the cartridge-boxes used to salt pieces of roasted horse. — Young Lapouriel. — Arrival at Wilna. — The Prince of Aremberg half dead with the cold. — The carriages burned. — The alarm. — The treasure-chest of the army is pillaged.

THE day preceding the passage of the Beresina was one of terrible solemnity. The Emperor appeared to have made his decision with the cool resolution of a man who com-

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mits an act of desperation; nevertheless, councils were held, and it was resolved that the army should strip itself of all useless burdens which might harass its march. Never was there more unanimity of opinion, never were deliberations more calm or grave. It was the calm of men who decide to make one last effort, trusting in the will of God and their own courage. The Emperor had the eagles brought from each corps and burned, since he thought that fugitives had no need of them. It was a sad sight to see these men advancing from the ranks one by one, and casting in the flames what they valued more than their lives, and I have never seen dejection more profound, or shame more keenly felt; for this seemed much like a general degradation to the brave soldiers of the battle of La Moskwa. The Emperor had made these eagles talismans, and this showed only too plainly he had lost faith in them. And although the soldiers realized that the situation of affairs must be desperate to have come to this, it was at least some consolation to think that the Russians would have only the ashes. What a scene was presented by the burning of these eagles, above all to those who like myself had been present at the magnificent ceremonies attending their distribution to the army in the camp of Boulogne before the campaign of Austerlitz!

Horses were needed for the artillery, and at this critical moment the artillery was the safeguard of the army. The Emperor consequently gave orders that the horses should be impressed, for he estimated the loss of a single cannon or caisson as irreparable. The artillery was confided to the care of a corps composed entirely of officers, and numbering about five hundred men. His Majesty was so much touched

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at seeing these brave officers become soldiers again, put their hand to the cannon like simple cannoneers, and resume their practice of the manual of arms in their devotion to duty, that he called this corps his *sacred squadron*. With the same spirit which made these officers become soldiers again, the other superior officers descended to a lower rank, with no concern as to the designation of their grade. Generals of division Grouchy and Sebastiani took again the rank of simple captain.

When near Borizow we halted at the sound of loud shouts, thinking ourselves cut off by the Russian army. I saw the Emperor grow pale; it was like a thunderbolt. A few lancers were hastily dispatched, and we saw them soon returning waving their banners in the air. His Majesty understood the signal, and even before the cuirassiers had reassured us, so clearly did he keep in mind even the possible position of each corps of his army, he exclaimed, "*I bet it is Victor.*". And in fact it was Marshal Victor, who awaited us with lively impatience. It seemed that the marshal's army had received very vague information of our disasters, and was prepared to receive the Emperor with joy and enthusiasm. His soldiers still fresh and vigorous, at least compared with the rest of the army, could hardly believe the evidence of their own eyes when they saw our wretched condition; but the cries of *Vive l'Empereur* were none the less enthusiastic.

But a different impression was made when the rear guard of the army filed before them; and great confusion ensued, as each one of the marshal's army who recognized a friend rushed out of the ranks and hastened to him, offering food and clothing, and were almost frightened by the

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From a Painting by H. Bellange

NAPOLEON AT THE BATTLE OF WAGRAM

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voracity with which they ate, while many embraced each other silently in tears. One of the marshal's best and bravest officers stripped off his uniform to give it to a poor soldier whose tattered clothing exposed him almost naked to the cold, donning himself an old cloak full of holes, saying that he had more strength to resist the freezing temperature. If an excess of misery sometimes dries up the fountains of the heart, sometimes also it elevates men to a great height, as we see in this instance. Many of the most wretched blew out their brains in despair; and there was in this act, the last which nature suggests as an end to misery, a resignation and coolness which makes one shudder to contemplate. Those who thus put an end to their lives cared less for death than they did to put an end to their insupportable sufferings, and I witnessed during the whole of this disastrous campaign what vain things are physical strength and human courage when the moral strength springing from a determined will is lacking. The Emperor marched between the armies of Marshal Victor and Marshal Oudinot; and it was a depressing sight to see these movable masses halt sometimes in succession, — first those in front, then those who came next, then the last. And when Marshal Oudinot who was in the lead suspended his march from any unknown cause, there was a general movement of alarm, and ominous rumors were circulated; and since men who have seen much are disposed to believe anything, false rumors were as readily credited as true, and the alarm lasted until the front of the army again moved forward, and their confidence was somewhat restored.

On the 25th, at five o'clock in the evening, there had been thrown across the river temporary bridges made of

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beams taken from the cabins of the Poles. It had been reported in the army that the bridges would be finished during the night. The Emperor was much disturbed when informed that the army had been thus deceived; for he knew how much more quickly discouragement ensues when hope has been frustrated, and consequently took great pains to keep the rear of the army informed as to every incident, so that the soldiers should never be left under cruel delusions. At a little after five the beams gave way, not being sufficiently strong; and as it was necessary to wait until the next day, the army again abandoned itself to gloomy forebodings. It was evident that they must endure the fire of the enemy all the next day. But there was no longer any choice; for it was only at the end of this night of agony and suffering of every description that the first beams were secured in the river. It is hard to comprehend how men could submit to stand up to their mouths in water filled with ice, and rallying all the strength which nature had given them, with all that the energy of devotion furnished, and drive piles several feet deep into a miry bed, struggling against the most horrible fatigue, pushing back with their hands enormous blocks of ice, which would have submerged and sunk them with their weight; in a word, warring even to the death with cold, the greatest enemy of life. This marvelous feat was accomplished by our French pontoon corps. Many perished, borne away by the current or benumbed by the cold. The glory of this achievement, in my opinion, exceeds in value many others.

The Emperor awaited daylight in a poor hut, and in the morning said to Prince Berthier, "Well, Berthier, how

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can we get out of this?" He was seated in his room, great tears flowing down his cheeks, which were paler than usual; and the prince was seated near him.

They exchanged few words, and the Emperor appeared overcome by his grief. I leave to the imagination what was passing in his soul. At last the King of Naples opened his heart to his brother-in-law, and entreated him, in the name of the army, to think of his own safety, so imminent had the peril become. Some brave Poles had offered themselves as escort for the Emperor; he could cross the Beresina higher up, and reach Wilna in five days. The Emperor silently shook his head in token of refusal, which the king understood, and the matter was no longer considered.

Amid overwhelming disasters, the few blessings which reach us are doubly felt. I observed this many times in the case of his Majesty and his unfortunate army. On the banks of the Beresina, just as the first supports of the bridge had been thrown across, Marshal Ney and the King of Naples rushed at a gallop to the Emperor, calling to him that the enemy had abandoned his threatening position; and I saw the Emperor, beside himself with joy, not being able to believe his ears, go himself at a run to throw a searching glance in the direction they said Admiral Tschitzakoff[1] had taken. This news was indeed true; and the Emperor, overjoyed and out of breath from his race, exclaimed, "I have deceived the admiral." This retrograde movement of the enemy was hard to under-

[1] Born 1766; minister of marine, 1800; admiral, 1807; resigned on account of his failure on this occasion, and spent his after life in foreign countries; died 1840. — TRANS.

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stand, when the opportunity to overwhelm us was within his reach; and I doubt whether the Emperor, in spite of his apparent satisfaction, was very sure of the happy consequences which this retreat of the enemy might bring to us.

Before the bridge was finished, about four hundred men were carried part of the way across the river on two miserable rafts, which could hardly sustain themselves against the current; and we saw them from the bank rudely shaken by the great blocks of ice which encumbered the river. These blocks came to the very edge of the raft, where, finding an obstacle, they remained stationary for some time, then were suddenly ingulfed under these frail planks with a terrible shock, though the soldiers stopped the largest with their bayonets, and turned their course aside from the rafts.

The impatience of the army was at its height. The first who reached the opposite bank were the brave Jacqueminot, *aide-de-camp* of Marshal Oudinot, and Count Predzieczki, a brave Lithuanian, of whom the Emperor was very fond, especially since he had shared our sufferings with such fidelity and devotion. Both crossed the river on horseback, and the army uttered shouts of admiration as they saw that the chiefs were the first to set the example of intrepidity. They braved enough dangers to make the strongest brain reel. The current forced their horses to swim diagonally across, which doubled the length of the passage; and as they swam, blocks of ice struck against their flanks and sides, making terrible gashes.

At one o'clock General Legrand and his division were crossing the bridge constructed for the infantry, while the

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Emperor sat on the opposite bank, and some of the cannon becoming entangled had for an instant delayed the march. The Emperor rushed on the bridge, put his hand to the work, and assisted in separating the pieces. The enthusiasm of the soldiers was at its height; and it was amid cries of "*Vive l'Empereur*" that the infantry set foot on the opposite bank.

A short time after, the Emperor, learning that General Partonneaux had laid down his arms, was deeply affected by this news, and gave vent to reproaches which were somewhat unjust to the general. Later, when he had received more correct information, he understood perfectly the part which necessity and despair had played in this surrender.

It is a fact that the brave general did not come to this decision till he had done all that a brave man could under the circumstances; for it is permitted a man to recoil when there is nothing left but to let himself be killed to no purpose.

When the artillery and baggage-wagons passed, the bridge was so overloaded that it fell in; and instantly a retrograde movement took place, which crowded together all the multitude of stragglers who were advancing, like a flock being herded, in the rear of the artillery. Another bridge had been constructed, as if the sad thought had occurred that the first might give way. But the second was narrow and without a railing; nevertheless, it at first seemed a very valuable makeshift in such a calamity. But how disasters follow each other! The stragglers rushed there in crowds. The artillery, the baggage-wagons, in a word, all the army material, had been in the front on the first bridge when

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it was broken; and when, from the sudden panic which seized on those in the rear of this multitude, the dreadful catastrophe was learned, the last there found themselves first in gaining the other bridge. It was urgent the artillery should pass first, consequently it rushed impetuously towards the only road to safety which remained. No pen can describe the scene of horror which now ensued; for it was literally over a road of trampled human bodies that conveyances of all sorts reached the bridge. On this occasion could be seen how much brutality, and even cold-blooded ferocity, can be produced in the human mind by the instinct of self-preservation. There were some stragglers most frantic of all, who wounded, and even killed, with their bayonets, the unfortunate horses which obeyed the lash of their guides; and several caissons were left on the road in consequence of this slaughter.

As I have said, the bridge had no railing; and crowds of those who forced their way across fell into the river and were ingulfed beneath the ice. Others in their fall tried to stop themselves by grasping the planks of the bridge, and remained suspended over the abyss until their hands, crushed by the wheels of the vehicles, lost their grasp, and they went to join their comrades as the waves closed over them. Entire caissons, with drivers and horses, were precipitated into the water.

Poor women were seen holding their children out of the water in the effort to delay for a few instants their death, and death in such a frightful form, — a truly admirable maternal incident, which the genius of the painter has divined in painting scenes from the Deluge, and which we saw in all its heartrending and frightful reality! The

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Emperor wished to retrace his steps, believing that his presence might restore order; but he was dissuaded from this project so earnestly, that he withstood the promptings of his heart and remained, though certainly it was not his elevated rank which kept him on the bank. All the suffering he endured could be seen when he inquired every instant where the crossing was, if they could still hear cannon rolling over the bridge, if the cries had not ceased somewhat in that direction. "The reckless creatures! Why could they not wait a little?" said he.

There were fine examples of devotion under these distressing circumstances. A young artilleryman threw himself into the water to save a poor mother with two children, who was attempting to gain the other shore in a little canoe. The load was too heavy; an enormous block of ice floated against and sunk the little boat. The cannoneer seized one of the children, and, swimming vigorously, bore it to the bank; but the mother and the other child perished. This kind young man adopted the orphan as his son. I do not know if he had the happiness of regaining France.

Officers harnessed themselves to sleds to carry some of their companions who were rendered helpless by their wounds. They wrapped these unfortunates as warmly as possible, cheered them from time to time with a glass of brandy when they could procure it, and lavished on them most touching attentions.

There were many who behaved in this manner, many of whose names we are ignorant; and how few returned to enjoy in their own country the remembrance of the most admirable deeds of their lives!

The bridge was burned at eight o'clock in the morning.

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On the 29th the Emperor quitted the banks of the Beresina, and we slept at Kamen, where his Majesty occupied a poor wooden building which the icy air penetrated from all sides through the windows; nearly all the glass of which being broken, we closed the openings as well as we could with bundles of hay. A short distance from us, in a large lot, were penned up the wretched Russian prisoners whom the army drove before it. I had much difficulty in comprehending this delusion of victory which our poor soldiers still kept up by dragging after them this wretched luxury of prisoners, who could only be an added burden, as they required their constant surveillance.

When the conquerors are dying of famine, what becomes of the conquered? These poor Russians, exhausted by marches and famine, nearly all perished this night. In the morning they were found huddled pell-mell against each other, striving thus to obtain a little warmth. The weakest had succumbed; and their stiffened bodies were propped the whole night against the living without their even being aware of it. Some in their hunger ate their dead companions. The hardihood with which the Russians endure pain has often been remarked. I can cite one instance which surpasses belief. One of these fellows, after being separated from his corps, had been struck by a cannon-ball which had cut off both his legs and killed his horse. A French officer on a reconnoitering tour on the bank of the river where this Russian had fallen, perceived at some distance an object which appeared to be a dead horse, and yet he could see that it moved.

He approached, and saw the bust of a man whose extremities were concealed in the stomach of the horse.

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This poor creature had been there four days, inclosing himself in his horse as a shelter against the cold, and feeding upon infected morsels torn from this horrible retreat.

On the 3d of December we arrived at Malodeczno. During the whole day the Emperor appeared thoughtful and anxious. He had frequent confidential conversations with the grand equerry, M. de Caulaincourt, and I suspected some extraordinary measure. I was not deceived in my conjectures. At two leagues from Smorghoni, the Duke of Vicenza summoned me, and told me to go on in front and give orders to have the six best horses harnessed to my carriage, which was the lightest of all, and keep them in constant readiness. I reached Smorghoni before the Emperor, who did not arrive till the following night. The cold was excessive; and the Emperor alighted in a poor house on a square, where he established his headquarters. He took a light repast, wrote with his own hand the twenty-ninth bulletin of the army, and ordered all the marshals to be summoned.

Nothing had yet transpired as to the Emperor's plans, but in great and desperate measures there is always something unusual which does not escape the most clear-sighted. The Emperor was never so amiable nor so communicative, and one felt that he was endeavoring to prepare his most devoted friends for some overwhelming news. He talked for some time on indifferent subjects, then spoke of the great deeds performed during the campaign, referring with pleasure to the retreat of General Ney *whom they had at last found.*

Marshal Davoust appeared abstracted; and the Emperor said to him, "At least say something, Marshal." There

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had been for some time a little coolness between him and the Emperor, and his Majesty reproached him with the rarity of his visits, but he could not dissipate the cloud which darkened every brow; for the Emperor's secret had not been as well kept as he had hoped. After supper the Emperor ordered Prince Eugène to read the twenty-ninth bulletin, and spoke freely of his plan, saying that his departure was *essential in order to send help to the army.* He gave his orders to the marshals, all of whom appeared sad and discouraged. It was ten o'clock when the Emperor, saying it was time to take some repose, embraced all the marshals and retired. He felt the need of withdrawing; for he had been oppressed by the constraint of this interview, as could easily be seen by the extreme agitation his countenance manifested at its close. About half an hour after, the Emperor called me into his room and said, "Constant, I am about to leave; I thought I should be able to take you with me, but I have taken into consideration the fact that several carriages would attract attention; it is essential that I experience no delay, and I have given orders that you are to set out immediately upon the return of my horses, and you will consequently follow me at a short distance." I was suffering greatly from my old malady; hence the Emperor would not allow me to go with him on the boot as I requested, in order that he should receive his customary attentions from me. He said, "No, Constant, you will follow me in a carriage, and I hope that you will be able to arrive not more than a day behind me." He departed with the Duke of Vicenza, and Roustan on the box; my carriage was unharnessed, and I remained to my great regret. The Emperor left in the night.

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By daybreak the army had learned the news, and the impression it made cannot be depicted. Discouragement was at its height; and many soldiers cursed the Emperor, and reproached him for abandoning them. There was universal indignation. The Prince of Neuchâtel was very uneasy, and asked news of every one, though he would naturally have been the first to receive any information. He feared lest Napoleon, who had a feeble escort, should be made prisoner by the Cossacks, who, if they had learned his departure, would make the greatest efforts to carry him off.

This night, the 6th, the cold increased greatly; and its severity may be imagined, as birds were found on the ground frozen stiff with the cold. Soldiers who had seated themselves with their head in their hands, and bodies bent forward in order to thus feel less the emptiness of their stomachs, were found dead in this position. As we breathed, the vapor from our lips froze on our eyebrows, little white icicles formed on the mustaches and beards of the soldiers; and in order to melt them they warmed their chins by the bivouac fire, and as may be imagined a large number did not do this with impunity. Artillerymen held their hands to the horses' nostrils to get a little warmth from the strong breathing of these animals. Their flesh was the usual food of the soldiers. Large slices of this meat were thrown on the coals; and when frozen by the cold, it was carried without spoiling, like salted bacon, the powder from the cartridge-boxes taking the place of salt.

This same night we had with us a young Parisian belonging to a very wealthy family, who had endeavored

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to obtain employment in the Emperor's household. He was very young, and had been received among the boys of the apartments, and the poor child was taking his first journey. He was seized with the fever as we left Moscow, and was so ill this evening that we could not remove him from the wagon belonging to the wardrobe service in which he had been made as comfortable as possible. He died there in the night, much to be regretted by all who knew him. Poor Lapouriel was a youth of charming character, fine education, the hope of his family, and an only son. The ground was so hard that we could not dig a grave, and experienced the chagrin of leaving his remains unburied.

I set out next day armed with an order from the Prince de Neuchâtel that all on the road should furnish me horses in preference to all others. At the first post after leaving Smorghoni, whence the Emperor had set out with the Duke of Vicenza, this order was of invaluable aid to me, for there were horses for only one carriage. I found myself a rival to M. the Count Daru, who arrived at the same time. It is useless to say that without the Emperor's orders to rejoin him as quickly as possible I would not have exercised my right to take precedence over the intendant general of the army; but impelled by my duty I showed the order of the Prince de Neuchâtel to M. the Count Daru, and the latter, after examining it, said to me, "You are right, M. Constant; take the horses, but I beg you send them back as quickly as possible." How crowded with disasters was this retreat! After much suffering and privation we arrived at Wilna, where it was necessary to pass a long, narrow bridge before

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entering the town. The artillery and wagons occupied the whole bridge so entirely that no other carriage could pass; and it was useless to say "His Majesty's service," as we received only maledictions. Seeing the impossibility of advancing, I alighted from my carriage, and found there the Prince of Aremberg, ordnance officer of the Emperor, in a pitiable condition, his face, nose, ears, and feet having been frozen. He was seated behind my carriage. I was cut to the heart, and said to the prince that if he had informed me of his condition I would have given him my place. He could hardly answer me. I helped him for some time; but seeing how necessary it was that we should both advance, I undertook to carry him. He was delicate, slender, and about medium height. I took him in my arms; and with this burden, elbowing, pushing, hurting some, being hurt by others, I at last reached the headquarters of the King of Naples, and deposited the prince there, recommending that he should receive every attention which his condition required. After this I resumed my carriage.

Everything had failed us. Long before reaching Wilna, the horses being dead, we had received orders to burn our carriages with all the contents. I lost heavily in this journey, as I had purchased several valuable articles which were burned with my baggage of which I always had a large quantity on our journeys. A large part of the Emperor's baggage was lost in the same manner.

A very handsome carriage of Prince Berthier, which had just arrived and had not been used, was also burned. At these fires, four grenadiers were stationed, who with fixed bayonet prevented any one from taking from the fire what had been ordered to be sacrificed.

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The next day the carriages which had been spared were visited in order to be assured that nothing had been kept back. I was allowed to keep only two shirts. We slept at Wilna; but the next day very early the alarm was given that the Russians were at the gates of the town. Men rushed in, beside themselves with terror, crying "*We are lost!*" The King of Naples was quickly aroused; sprang from his bed; and the order was instantly given that the Emperor's service should leave at once. The confusion made by all this can be imagined. There was no time for any arrangements; we were obliged to start without delay. The Prince of Aremberg was put into one of the king's carriages with what could be secured for the most pressing needs; and we had hardly left the town before we heard shouts behind us, and the thunder of cannon accompanied by rapid firing. We had to climb a mountain of ice. The horses were fatigued, and we made no progress. The wagon with the treasure-chest of the army was abandoned; and a part of the money was pillaged by men who had not gone a hundred steps before they were obliged to throw it away in order to save their lives.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

The Emperor is badly lodged during the whole campaign. — Huts infested with vermin. — Manner in which the apartments of the Emperor were arranged. — Hall of council. — Proclamation of the Emperor. — Inhabitants of Russian huts. — How the Emperor was lodged when houses could not be obtained. — The tent. — Marshal Berthier. — A temporary coolness between the Emperor and him. — M. Colin, controller of the kitchen. — Roustan. — Sleeplessness of the Emperor. — His care of his hands. — He was easily affected by the cold. — Demolition of a chapel at Witepsk. — Discontent of the inhabitants. — Singular spectacle. — The Soldiers of the guard mingling with the bathers. — Review of the grenadiers. — Installation of General Friant. — The Emperor gives him the accolade. — Mistake of those who think the suite of the Emperor fared better than the rest of the army. — Generals eating ammunition-bread. — Community of suffering between the generals and soldiers. — The marauders. — Beds of straw. — M. de Beausset. — Anecdote. — A night with the persons of the Emperor's suite. — Cloth bags for beds. — The Emperor's solicitude concerning the persons of his suite. — Vermin. — We assign our mattresses to the wounded.

DURING the whole Russian campaign, the Emperor was nearly always badly lodged. It was necessary, however, to accommodate himself to circumstances; though this was a somewhat difficult task to those who were accustomed to lodge in palaces. The Emperor accepted the situation bravely, and all his followers consequently did the same. In consequence of the system of incendiarism adopted as the policy of Russia, the wealthy part of the population withdrew into the country, abandoning to the enemy their houses already ruined. In truth, on the whole road leading to Moscow, with the exception of a few unimportant towns, the dwellings were very wretched; and after long and

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fatiguing marches, we were very happy if we found even a hut at the place the Emperor indicated as headquarters. The owners of these miserable hovels on quitting them left there sometimes two or three seats and wooden beds, in which were an abundant supply of vermin that no invasion could drive out. The least filthy place was chosen, which was usually the most airy; and we knew when the cold came, icy breezes would not fail us. When the location had been chosen, and we decided to halt there, a carpet was spread on the ground, the Emperor's iron bedstead set up, and a dressing-case containing everything necessary in a bedroom placed open on a small table. This case also contained a breakfast service for several persons, which luxury was displayed when the Emperor entertained his marshals. It was necessary, at all events, to bring ourselves down to the habits of the humblest citizens of the province. If the house had two rooms, one served as sleeping and dining room, the other for his Majesty's cabinet. The box of books, geographical maps, the portfolio, and a table covered with green cloth, were the entire furniture. This was also the council chamber; and from these beggarly huts were sent forth those prompt and trenchant decisions which changed the order of battle and often the fortunes of the day, and those strong and energetic proclamations which so quickly reanimated the discouraged army. When our residence was composed of three rooms, — an extremely rare occurrence, — then the third room, or closet, was occupied by the Prince de Neuchâtel, who always slept as near by as possible. We often found in these wretched dwellings old decayed furniture of singular shapes, and little images in wood or plaster of male or female saints which the proprie-

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tors had left. Frequently, however, we found poor people in these dwellings, who, having nothing to save from conquest, had remained. These good people seemed much ashamed to entertain so badly the Emperor of the French, gave us what they had, and were not, on that account, less badly esteemed by us. More of the poor than rich received the Emperor into their houses; and the Kremlin was the last of the foreign palaces in which the Emperor slept during the Russian campaign.

When there were no houses to be found, we erected the Emperor's tent, and, in order to divide it into three apartments curtains were hung; in one of these apartments the Emperor slept, the next was the Emperor's cabinet, and the third was occupied by his *aides-de-camp* and officers of the service; this latter room being ordinarily used as the Emperor's dining-room, his meals being prepared outside. I alone slept in his room. Roustan, who accompanied his Majesty on horseback, slept in the entrance room of the tent, in order that the sleep which was so necessary to him should not be disturbed. The secretaries slept either in the cabinet or the entrance room. The higher officers and those of the service ate where and when they could, and, like the simple soldiers, made no scruple of eating without tables.

Prince Berthier's tent was near that of the Emperor, and the prince always breakfasted and dined with him. They were like two inseparable friends. This attachment was very touching, and points of difference rarely arose between them. Nevertheless, there was, I think, a little coolness between him and the Emperor at the time his Majesty left the army of Moscow. The old marshal

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wished to accompany him; but the Emperor refused, and thereupon ensued an animated but fruitless discussion.

The meals were served on the campaign by M. Colin, controller of the kitchen service, and Roustan, or a bedroom servant.

During this campaign more than any other the Emperor rose often in the night, put on his dressing-gown, and worked in his cabinet: frequently he had insomnia, which he could not overcome; and when the bed at last became unbearable, he sprang from it suddenly, took a book and read, walking back and forth, and when his head was somewhat relieved lay down again. It was very rarely he slept the whole of two nights in succession; but often he remained thus in the cabinet till the hour for his toilet, when he returned to his room and I dressed him. The Emperor took great care of his hands; but on this campaign he many times neglected this species of coquetry, and during the excessive heat did not wear gloves, as they inconvenienced him so greatly. He endured the cold heroically, though it was easy to see he suffered much from it physically.

At Witepsk the Emperor, finding the space in front of the house in which he had his quarters too small to hold a review of the troops, had several small buildings torn down in order to enlarge it. There was a small dilapidated chapel which it was also necessary to destroy in order to accomplish this, and it had been already partly torn down, when the inhabitants assembled in large numbers, and loudly expressed their disapprobation of this measure. But the Emperor having given his consent to their removing the sacred objects contained in the chapel, they were

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pacified; and, armed with this authority, several among them entered the sacred place, and emerged bearing with great solemnity wooden images of immense height, which they deposited in the other churches.

We were witnesses while in this town of a singular spectacle, and one well calculated to shock our sense of decency. For many days during the intense heat we saw the inhabitants, both men and women, rushing to the banks of the river, removing their clothing with the greatest indifference to spectators, and bathing together, most of them nearly naked. The soldiers of the guard took pleasure in mingling with these bathers of both sexes; but as the soldiers were not so decorous as the inhabitants, and as the imprudencies committed by our men soon went too far, these worthy people relinquished the pleasures of their bath, very much displeased because sport was made of an exercise they had enjoyed with so much gravity and seriousness.

One evening I was present at a grand review of the foot grenadiers of the guard, in which all the regiments seemed to take much delight, since it was in honor of the installation of General Friant[1] as commander of the corps. The Emperor gave him the accolade, which was the only occasion on which I saw this done during the campaign; and as the general was much beloved by the army, it was amidst the acclamations of all that he received this honor from the Emperor.

[1] Louis Friant, born in Picardy, 1758; brigadier-general, 1794; served on the Rhine and in Italy; accompanied Napoleon to Egypt, and became general of division; wounded at Austerlitz (1805), and was at Jéna and Wagram; commanded the grenadiers of the guard in Russian campaign, and was severely wounded at Waterloo; died 1829. — TRANS.

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Promotions were usually welcomed by the soldiers with great enthusiasm, for the Emperor required that they should take place with much pomp and ceremony.

Many persons thought that to be near the Emperor was a proof of being well provided for on the campaign. This is a great mistake, as even the kings and princes who accompanied his Majesty on his campaigns could easily prove; and if these great personages lacked absolute necessaries, it may well be believed that the persons comprising the different services fared badly. The Emperor himself often dispensed with ordinary comforts which would have been very agreeable to him after the fatigues of the day.

At the hour for the bivouac it was a general "*lodge who can;*" but the poorest soldier never had in his deprivation the chagrin of seeing his superiors enjoying abundance and scandalous luxury. The first generals of the army often dined on ammunition-bread with as much pleasure as the simple soldier, and on the retreat the misery could not have been more general. This idea of deprivations shared by all did much to restore hope and energy to the most discouraged; and, I may add, never has more reciprocal sympathy between chiefs and soldiers been seen, in support of which statement innumerable instances could be given.

When evening came the fires were kindled, and those foragers who had been most successful invited their companions to share their good cheer. In the worst times there was poor, yet still not the worst, fare to offer, consisting of slices of broiled horse-flesh.

Many soldiers deprived themselves of some valuable booty to offer it to their chief, and selfishness was not so

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general that this noble French courtesy did not reappear from time to time to recall the happy days of France. Straw was the bed of all; and those of the marshals who in Paris slept on most luxurious beds of down did not find this couch too hard in Russia.

M. de Beausset has given me a very amusing account of one night, when sleeping pell-mell on a little straw, in very narrow quarters, the *aides-de-camp* attending upon the Emperor stepped mercilessly on the limbs of their sleeping companions, who, fortunately, did not all suffer from gout like M. Beausset, and were not injured by such sudden and oft-repeated onslaughts. He cried, "What brutes!" and drawing his legs under him, cowered down in his corner until this passing and repassing had ceased for a while.

Picture to yourself large rooms, filthy, unfurnished, and open to the wind, which entered through every window, nearly all the glass of which was broken, with crumbling walls and fetid air, which we warmed as well as possible with our breath, a vast litter of straw prepared as if for horses, and on this litter men shivering with cold, throwing themselves about, pressing against each other, murmuring, swearing, some unable to close their eyes, others more forfortunate snoring loudly, and in the midst of this mass of legs and feet, a general awakening in the night when an order from the Emperor arrived, and you may form an idea of the inn and the guests.

As for myself, during the entire campaign I did not a single time undress to retire to bed, for I never found one anywhere. It was necessary to supply this deficiency by some means; and as it is well known that necessity is ever

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ready with inventions, we supplied deficiency in our furnishings in the following manner: we had great bags of coarse cloth made, into which we entered, and thus protected, threw ourselves on a little straw, when we were fortunate enough to obtain it; and for several months I took my rest during the night in this manner, and even this I frequently could not enjoy for as many as five or six nights at a time, so exacting were the requirements of my position.

If it is remembered that all these sufferings continued in their petty details each day, and that when night came we had not even a bed on which to stretch our weary limbs, some idea may be formed of the privations we endured on this campaign. The Emperor never uttered a word of complaint when beset by such discomforts, and his example inspired us with courage; and at last we became so accustomed to this fatiguing and wandering existence, that, in spite of the cold and privations of every sort to which we were subjected, we often jested about the dainty arrangements of our apartments. The Emperor on the campaign was affected only by the sufferings of others, though his health was sometimes so much impaired as to cause anxiety, especially when he denied himself all rest not absolutely required; and yet I heard him constantly inquiring if there were lodgings for all, and he would not be satisfied until fully informed of every particular.

Although the Emperor nearly always had a bed, the poor quarters in which it was set up were often so filthy, that in spite of all the care taken to clean it, I more than once found on his clothing a kind of vermin very disagreeable, and very common in Russia. We suffered more than

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the Emperor from this inconvenience, being deprived as we were of proper linen and other changes of clothing, since the greater part of our effects had been burned with the wagons containing them. This extreme measure had been taken, as I have said, for good reasons, — all the horses having died from cold or famine.

We were little better lodged in the palace of the Czars than on the bivouac. For several days we had only mattresses; but as a large number of wounded officers had none, the Emperor ordered ours to be given them. We made the sacrifice willingly, and the thought that we were assisting others more unfortunate than ourselves would have made the hardest bed endurable. Besides, in this war we had more than one opportunity to learn how to put aside all feelings of egotism and narrow personality; and had we been guilty of such forgetfulness, the Emperor was ever ready to recall us to this plain and simple duty.

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## CHAPTER IX.

Publication of the twenty-ninth bulletin at Paris. — The Emperor arrives after an interval of two days. — Marie Louise and the first defeat. — Josephine and success. — The two Empresses. — Resources of France. — Influence of the Emperor's presence. — First defection, and fear of imitators. — My departure from Smorghoni. — The king of Naples in command of the army. — Route followed by the Emperor. — Hope of the Polish population. — Confidence inspired by the Emperor. — My arrival at the Tuileries. — I am summoned to his Majesty in my traveling clothes. — Very kind welcome. — A word of the Emperor to Marie Louise, and coolness of the Empress. — Kindness of Queen Hortense. — The Emperor's questions, and veracious replies. — I resume the duties of my service. — Flattering addresses. — The Emperor more occupied with Malet's enterprise than the disasters of Moscow. — Great number of persons in mourning. — The Emperor and Empress at the opera. — Quarrel between Talma and Geoffroy. — The Emperor does injustice to Talma. — No presents for persons attached to the Emperor's service. — The Emperor interested in my toilet. — Presents conveyed and gratuitous services. — Eighteen hundred francs income reduced to seventeen hundred. — The Emperor goes out in Paris. — Monuments visited without escort with Marshal Duroc. — Passion for building. — Unusual frequency of hunting-parties. — Political motives and the English journals.

THE only too famous twenty-ninth bulletin of the grand army was not published in Paris, where the consternation it spread through all classes is well known, until the 16th of December; and the Emperor, following close upon the heels of this solemn manifesto of our disasters, arrived in his capital forty-eight hours after, as if endeavoring to annul by his presence the evil effects which this communication might produce. On the 28th, at half past eleven in the evening, his Majesty alighted at the palace of the Tuileries. This was the first time since his accession to the

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consulate that Paris had witnessed his return from a campaign without announcing a new peace conquered by the glory of our arms. Under these circumstances, the numerous persons who from attachment to the Empress Josephine had always seen or imagined they saw in her a kind of protecting talisman of the success of the Emperor, did not fail to remark that the campaign of Russia was the first which had been undertaken since the Emperor's marriage to Marie Louise. Without any superstition, it could not be denied that, although the Emperor was always great even when fortune was contrary to him, there was a very marked difference between the reign of the two Empresses. The one witnessed only victories followed by peace. And the other, only wars, not devoid of glory, but devoid of results, until the grand and fatal conclusion in the abdication at Fontainebleau.

But it is anticipating too much to describe here events which few men dared to predict directly after the disasters of Moscow. All the world knows that the cold and a freezing temperature contributed more to our reverses than the enemy, whom we had pursued even into the heart of his burning capital. France still offered immense resources; and the Emperor was now there in person to direct their employment and increase their value. Besides, no defection was as yet apparent; and, with the exception of Spain, Sweden, and Russia, the Emperor considered all the European powers as allies. It is true the moment was approaching when General Yorck would give the signal, — for as well as I can recall, the first news came to the Emperor on the 10th of the following January, — and it was easy to see that his Majesty was profoundly affected by

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it, as he saw that Prussia would have many imitators in the other corps of the allied armies.

At Smorghoni, where the Emperor had left me setting out, as I have before related, with the Duke of Vicenza in the coach which had been destined for me, scarcely anything was thought of but how to extricate ourselves from the frightful situation in which we found ourselves placed. I well remember that after a few regrets that the Emperor was not in the midst of his lieutenants, the idea of being assured that he had escaped from all danger became the dominant sentiment, so much confidence did all place in his genius. Moreover, in departing, he had given the command to the King of Naples, whose valor the whole army admired, although it is said that a few marshals were secretly jealous of his royal crown. I have learned since, that the Emperor reached Warsaw on the 10th, having avoided passing through Wilna by making a circuit through the suburbs; and at last, after passing through Silesia, he had arrived at Dresden, where the good and faithful King of Saxony, although very ill, had himself borne to the Emperor. From this place his Majesty had followed the road by Nassau and Mayence.

I followed also the same route, but not with the same rapidity, although I lost no time. Everywhere, and above all in Poland at the places where I stopped, I was astonished to find the feeling of security I saw manifested. From all directions I heard the report that the Emperor was to return at the head of an army of three hundred thousand men. The Emperor had been known to do such surprising things, that nothing seemed impossible; and I learned that he himself had spread these reports on his

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passage, in order to restore the courage of the population. In several places I could procure no horses; and consequently, in spite of all my zeal, I did not reach Paris until six or eight days after the Emperor.

I had hardly alighted from my carriage, when the Emperor, who had been informed of my arrival, had me summoned. I observed to the messenger that I was not in a condition which would allow me to present myself before his Majesty. "That makes no difference," replied he; "the Emperor wishes you to come immediately, just as you are." I obeyed instantly; and went, or rather ran, to the Emperor's cabinet, where I found him with the Empress, Queen Hortense, and another person whose name I do not perfectly recall. The Emperor deigned to give me a most cordial welcome; and as the Empress seemed to pay no attention to me, said to her in a manner whose kindness I shall never forget, "Louise, do you not recognize Constant?"

"I perceived him." [1] This was the only reply of her Majesty the Empress; but such was not the case with Queen Hortense, who welcomed me as kindly as her adorable mother had always done.

The Emperor was very gay, and seemed to have forgotten all his fatigue. I was about to retire respectfully; but his Majesty said to me, "No, Constant, remain a minute longer, and tell me what you saw on your road." Even if I had any intention to conceal from the Emperor a part of the truth, taken thus unawares I should have lacked the time to prepare an agreeable falsehood; so I said to him

[1] Elsewhere, Constant has stated her reply was, "I had not perceived him." — TRANS.

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that everywhere, even in Silesia, my eyes had been struck by the same frightful spectacle, for everywhere I had seen the dead and the dying, and poor unfortunates struggling hopelessly against cold and hunger. "That is true, that is true," he said; "go and rest, my poor boy, you must be in need of it. To-morrow you will resume your service."

The next day, in fact, I resumed my duties near the Emperor, and I found him exactly the same as he had been before entering on the campaign; the same placidity was evident on his countenance. It would have been said that the past was no longer anything to him; and living ever in the future, he already saw victory perched again on our banner, and his enemies humiliated and vanquished. It is true that the numerous addresses he received, and discourses which were pronounced in his presence by the presidents of the senate and the council of state, were no less flattering than formerly; but it was very evident in his replies that if he pretended to forget this disastrous experience in Russia, he was more deeply concerned about the affair of General Malet than anything else.[1] As for

[1] In the reply of the Emperor to the council of state occurred the following remarkable passage, which it may not be amiss to repeat at this period as very singular:—

"It is to idealism and that gloomy species of metaphysics which, seeking subtilely for first causes, wishes to place on such foundations the legislation of a people, instead of adapting the laws to their knowledge of the human heart, and to the lessons of history, that it is necessary to attribute all the misfortunes our beautiful France has experienced. These errors have necessarily led to the rule of the men of blood. In fact, who has proclaimed the principle of insurrection as a duty? Who has paid adulation to the nation while claiming for it a sovereignty which it was incapable of exercising? Who has destroyed the sanctity and respect for the laws, in making them depend, not on the sacred principles of justice, or the nature of things and on civil justice, but simply on the will of an assembly of men strangers to the knowledge of civil, criminal, administrative, political, and military law? When one is called on to regenerate a state, there are directly opposite principles by which one must necessarily be guided."—NOTE BY THE EDITOR OF FRENCH EDITION.

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myself I cannot deny the painful feelings I experienced the first time I went out in Paris, and passed through the public promenades during my hours of leisure; for I was struck with the large number of persons in mourning whom I met, — the wives and sisters of our brave soldiers mowed down on the fields of Russia; but I kept these disagreeable impressions to myself.

A few days after my return to Paris their Majesties were present at the opera where *Jerusalem Delivered* was presented. I occupied a box which Count de Rémusat had the kindness to lend me for that evening (he was first chamberlain of the Emperor, and superintendent of theaters), and witnessed the reception given the Emperor and Empress. Never have I seen more enthusiasm displayed, and I must avow that the transition seemed to me most sudden from the recent passage of the Beresina to those truly magical scenes. It was on Sunday, and I left the theater a little before the close in order to reach the palace before the Emperor's return. I was there in time to undress him, and I well remember that his Majesty spoke to me that evening of the quarrel between Talma and Geoffroy which had occurred a few days before his arrival. The Emperor, although he had a high opinion of Talma, thought him completely in the wrong, and repeated several times, "A man of his age! A man of his

Claude François de Malet, born at Dole, 1754. In 1806 was a general officer, and was dismissed the service. Plotting against the Emperor, he was imprisoned from 1808 to 1812. On October 24 he issued a proclamation that the Emperor had died in Russia, and that he (Malet) had been appointed Governor of Paris by the senate. He made Savary prisoner, and shot General Hullin. He was made prisoner in turn by General Laborde, and summarily shot. — TRANS.

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age! that is inexcusable. Zounds!" added he, smiling, "do not people speak evil of me also? Have I not also critics who do not spare me? He should not be more sensitive than I." This affair, however, had no disagreeable result for Talma; for the Emperor was much attached to him, and overwhelmed him with pensions and presents.

Talma in this respect was among the very privileged few; for giving presents was not in his Majesty's *rôle*, especially to those in his private service. It was then near the 1st of January; but we built no air castles at this period, for the Emperor never made gifts. We knew that we could not expect any emoluments; though I, especially, could exercise no economy, for the Emperor required that my toilet should always be extremely elegant. It was something really extraordinary to see the master of half of Europe not disdaining to occupy himself with the toilet of his *valet de chambre;* even going so far that when he saw me in a new coat which pleased him he never failed to compliment me on it, adding, "You are very handsome, Monsieur Constant."

Even on the occasion of the marriage of the Emperor and Marie Louise, and that of the birth of the King of Rome, those composing the private service of his Majesty received no present, and the Emperor thought the expenses of these ceremonies too great. On one occasion, however, but not in consequence of any unusual circumstance, the Emperor said to me one morning as I finished dressing him, "Constant, go to M. Ménéval; I have given him orders to allow you eighteen hundred livres of income."[1] Now, it happened that the funds had gone up in the interval

[1] Roustan obtained the same favor on the same day. — CONSTANT.

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between the order and its execution; and instead of receiving eighteen hundred livres of rent, I received only seventeen, which I sold a short time after, and with the product of this sale bought a modest piece of property in the forest of Fontainebleau.

Sometimes the Emperor made presents to the princes and princesses of his family, of which I was nearly always the bearer; and I can assert that with two or three rare exceptions this duty was perfectly gratuitous, a circumstance which I recall here simply as a recollection. Queen Hortense and Prince Eugène were never included, according to my recollection, in the distribution of Imperial gifts, and the Princess Pauline was most often favored.

In spite of the numerous occupations of the Emperor, who after his return from the army spent much time during the day, and most of the nights, working in his cabinet, he showed himself more frequently in public than heretofore, going out almost without escort. On the 2d of January, 1813, for instance, I remember he went, accompanied only by Marshal Duroc, to visit the basilica of Notre Dame, the works of the archbishopric, those of the central depot of wines, and then, crossing the bridge of Austerlitz, the granaries, the fountain of the elephant, and finally the palace of the Bourse, which his Majesty often said was the handsomest building then existing in Europe. Next to his passion for war, that for monuments was strongest in the Emperor's heart. The cold was quite severe while his Majesty was taking these solitary excursions; but in fact the cold weather in Paris seemed a very mild temperature to all who had just returned from Russia.

I remarked at this time, that is to say at the end of 1812

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and the beginning of 1813, that the Emperor had never hunted so frequently. Two or three times a week I assisted him to don his hunting-costume, which he, like all persons of his suite, wore in accordance with the recently revived usage of the ancient monarchy.

The Empress often accompanied him in a coach, although the cold was intense; but when he gave an order there was nothing to be said. Knowing how distasteful the pleasures of the chase ordinarily were to his Majesty, I was surprised at this recent fondness he manifested, but soon learned that he was acting purely from political motives. One day Marshal Duroc was in his room, while he was putting on his green coat with gold lace; and I heard the Emperor say to the marshal, "It is very necessary that I should be in motion, and have the journals speak of it; for the imbeciles who write for the English journals repeat every day that I am sick, that I cannot move, and am no longer good for anything. Have patience! I will soon show them that I have as much strength of body as of mind." Besides all this, I think that the exercise of hunting in moderation was very good for the Emperor's health; for I never saw him in better condition than during the very time the English journals took pleasure in describing him as ill, and perhaps by these false statements were contributing to still further improve his health.

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KIRLOSKER SANGIT THEATRE
किर्लोस्कर
संगीत नाटकगृह,
पुणे.
POONA

## CHAPTER X.

**The chase and breakfast at Grosbois. — The Empress and her ladies. — An unexpected journey. — The road to Fontainebleau. — Hunting-costumes, and mortification of the ladies. — Precautions taken concerning the Empress. — The pretended and the real object of the journey. — Concordat with the Pope. — Disgraceful calumnies on the Emperor. — Preparatory steps and the Bishop of Nantes. — False statements refuted. — The Emperor's first visit to the Pope. — The truth as to their relations. — Distribution of pardons and favors. — The cardinals. — The Pope repents signing the Concordat. — Account given by the Emperor to Marshal Kellerman. — His elevated thoughts on ancient and modern Rome. — State of the pontificate in his Majesty's opinion. — Return to Paris. — Accouterments and offers of armed cavalry. — The Emperor's plans for making Paris the most beautiful city in the world. — The Emperor's conversation with M. Fontaine in regard to the buildings of Paris. — Plan of a residence for the minister of the kingdom of Italy. — Memorandum by the Emperor as to the palace of the King of Rome. — Incredible details which the Emperor considers. — The Élysée not liked by the Emperor, and the Tuileries deemed barely inhabitable. — More interested than ever in building. — The King of Rome at the review on the Champ de Mars. — Enthusiasm of the people and the soldiers. — The Emperor deeply gratified. — New inquiries about Rome addressed to M. Fontaine. — My salary doubled on the day of review to date from the end of the year.**

On the 19th of January the Emperor sent to inform the Empress that he was to hunt in the wood of Grosbois, and would breakfast with the Princess de Neuchâtel, and requested that her Majesty would accompany him. The Emperor ordered me also to be at Grosbois in order to assist him in changing his linen after the hunt. This hunting-party took place according to announcement; but to the unbounded amazement of the entire suite of the Emperor,

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just as we were on the point of re-entering our carriages, instead of taking the road to Paris, his Majesty gave orders to proceed to Fontainebleau. The Empress and the ladies who accompanied her had nothing except their hunting-costumes, and the Emperor was much diverted by the tribulations their vanity underwent in being unexpectedly engaged in a campaign without toilet equipments. Before leaving Paris the Emperor had given orders that there should be sent in all haste to Fontainebleau all that the Empress could need; but her ladies found themselves totally unprovided for, and it was very amusing to see them immediately on their arrival expedite express after express for objects of prime necessity which they ordered should be sent posthaste.

Nevertheless, it was soon evident that the hunting-party and breakfast at Grosbois had been simply a pretext, and that the Emperor's object had been to put an end to the differences which had for some time existed between his Holiness and his Majesty. Everything having been settled and prearranged, the Emperor and the Pope signed on the 25th an agreement under the name of Concordat, of which this is the purport: —

"His Majesty, the Emperor and King, and his Holiness, wishing to settle the differences which had arisen between them, and provide for difficulties which have unexpectedly arisen in regard to various affairs of the church, have agreed on the following articles as forming a basis for a definite arrangement.

Art. 1. His Holiness will exercise the pontificate in France, and in the Kingdom of Italy, in the same manner and under the same regulations as his predecessors.

2. The ambassadors, ministers, and *chargés d'affaires* to the Holy Father, and the ambassadors, ministers, and *chargés d'affaires* from him

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to foreign powers, will enjoy the immunities and privileges of members of the diplomatic corps.

3. The domains possessed by the Holy Father, and which have not been alienated, shall be exempt from all kinds of impost; they shall be administered by his agents or representatives. Those which have been alienated shall be replaced to the value of two million francs of revenue.

4. During the six months which usually follow the notification of appointments made by the Emperor to the archbishoprics and bishoprics of the Empire and the Kingdom of Italy the Pope shall perform the canonical institution in conformity with the Concordat, and by virtue of the present agreement; previous information concerning which shall be given by the archbishop. If six months shall expire without the Pope having performed this institution, the archbishop, and in his absence, where his duties are concerned, the senior bishop of the province, shall proceed to the institution of the aforementioned bishop, to the end that a see shall never be vacant more than one year.

5. The Pope shall appoint in France and in the Kingdom of Italy to ten bishoprics, which shall later be designated by mutual agreement.

6. The six suburban bishoprics shall be re-established, and shall be appointed to by the Pope. The property now held shall be restored, and similar measures taken in regard to that already sold. On the death of the bishops of Anagni and Rieti, their dioceses shall be united with that of the six bishops aforesaid, in conformity with the agreement between his Majesty and the Holy Father.

7. In respect to the bishops of the Roman States, unavoidably absent from their dioceses, the Holy Father shall exercise his right of bestowing bishoprics *in partibus*. He shall give them a pension equal to the revenue they formerly enjoyed, and their places in the sees thus vacated shall be supplied, both in the Empire and the Kingdom of Italy.

8. His Majesty and His Holiness will agree on some opportune occasion as to the reduction to be made in the bishoprics of Tuscany, and the province of Genoa, as well as those to be established in Holland, and the Hanseatic departments.

9. The propaganda, the penitential court, and the court of

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archives shall be established in the place of residence of the Holy Father.

10. His Majesty pardons freely the cardinals, bishops, priests, and laity who have incurred his disgrace in consequence of certain events.

11. The Holy Father agrees to the above resolutions in consideration of the existing condition of the church, and his confidence that his Majesty will grant his powerful assistance to the needs of the church, which are so numerous in the times in which we live."

NAPOLEON. PIUS VII.

Fontainebleau, 25 January, 1813.

It has been attempted by every possible means to throw odium on the conduct of the Emperor in this affair. He has been accused of having insulted the Pope, and even of having threatened him, all of which is most signally false. Everything was arranged in the most agreeable manner. M. Devoisin, bishop of Nantes, an ecclesiastic who was highly esteemed by the Emperor, and was his favorite mediator, in the frequent points of difference which arose between the Pope and his Majesty, had come to the Tuileries on the 19th of January, and after being closeted with the Emperor for two hours, had left for Fontainebleau. And it was immediately after this interview that the Emperor entered his carriage with the Empress in hunting costume, followed by the whole suite, similarly attired.

The Pope, forewarned by the Bishop of Nantes, awaited his Majesty; and as the most important points had been discussed and arranged in advance, and only a few clauses accessory to the main body of the Concordat remained to be decided, it was impossible that the interview should have been otherwise than amicable, a truth which is still more evident when we reflect on the kind feelings of the Holy

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Father towards the Emperor, their friendship for each other, and the admiration inspired in the Pope by the great genius of Napoleon. I affirm then, and I think with good reason, that the affair was conducted in a most honorable manner, and that the Concordat was signed freely and without compulsion by his Holiness, in presence of the cardinals assembled at Fontainebleau. It is an atrocious calumny which some one has dared to make that, on the reiterated refusal of the Pope, the Emperor placed in his hand a pen dipped in ink, and seizing him by the arm and hair, forced him to sign, saying that *he ordered it*, and that his disobedience would be punished by perpetual imprisonment. The one who invented this absurd fabrication must have known little of the Emperor's character. A person who was present at this interview, the circumstances of which have been so falsified, related them to me, and is my authority on the subject. Immediately on his arrival at Fontainebleau, the Emperor paid a visit to the Holy Father, who returned it next day, remaining two hours at least; and during this time his Majesty's manner was calm and firm, it is true, but full of respect and kind feeling for the person of the venerable Pope. A few stipulations of the proposed treaty alarmed the conscience of the Holy Father, which the Emperor perceived; and without waiting for any arguments declared that he would renounce them, and every scruple remaining in the mind of the Holy Father being thus satisfied, a secretary was called, who drew up the articles, which the Pope approved one by one, with most paternal benignity.

On the 25th of January, after the Concordat was definitely settled, the Holy Father repaired to the apartments

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of her Majesty the Empress; and both of the contracting parties appeared equally well satisfied, which is a sufficient proof that neither treachery nor violence had been used. The Concordat was signed by the august parties in the midst of a magnificent assemblage of cardinals, bishops, soldiers, etc. Cardinal Doria performed the duties of grand master of ceremonies, and it was he who received the signatures.

A countless number of congratulations were given and received, pardons asked and obtained, and relics, decorations, chaplets, and tobacco-boxes distributed by both parties. Cardinal Doria received from his Majesty the gold eagle of the Legion of Honor. The great eagle was also given to Cardinal Fabricio Ruffo; Cardinal Maury, the Bishop of Nantes, and the Archbishop of Tours received the grand cross of the order of the Reunion; the Bishops of Evreux and Treves, the cross of officers of the Legion of Honor; and finally the Cardinal of Bayonne and the Bishop of Evreux were made senators by his Majesty. Doctor Porta, the Pope's physician, was presented with a pension of twelve thousand francs, and the ecclesiastical secretary who entered the cabinet to copy the articles of the Concordat received a present of a magnificent ring set with brilliants.

His Holiness had hardly signed the Concordat before he repented of it. The following was related to Marshal Kellerman by the Emperor at Mayence the last of April:—

"The day after the signing of the famous Concordat of Fontainebleau, the Pope dined in public with me; but in the night he was ill, or pretended to be. He was a lamb-like, honest, and truly good man, whom I highly esteemed

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and loved, and who had some regard for me I am sure. Would you believe it, he wrote me a week after signing the Concordat that he much regretted having done so, that his conscience reproached him for it, and urged me earnestly to consider it as of no effect. This was owing to the fact that immediately after leaving me he had fallen into the hands of his usual advisers, who made a scarecrow out of what had just occurred. If we had been together I could easily have reassured him. I replied that what he demanded was contrary to the interests of France; and moreover, being infallible, he could not have made a mistake, and his conscience was too quick to take the alarm for him to have done wrong.

"In fact, compare the condition of Rome formerly with what it is to-day. Paralyzed by the necessary consequences of the Revolution, could she have risen again and maintained her position? A vicious government as to political matters has taken the place of the former Roman legislation, which, without being perfect, nevertheless contributed to form great men of every kind. Modern Rome has applied to its political government principles better suited to a religious order, and has carried them out in a manner fatal to the happiness of the people.

"Thus *charity* is the most perfect of Christian virtues; it is necessary to give charity to all who ask it. This form of reasoning has rendered Rome the receptacle of the dregs of all nations. One sees collected there (so I am told, for I have never visited it) all the idlers of the earth, who come thither to take refuge, assured of finding an abundant support with much to spare. And thus the papal territory, which nature has destined to produce immense wealth from

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its situation under a favorable sky, from the multiplicity of streams with which it is watered, and above all from the fertility of the soil, languishes for want of cultivation. Berthier has often told me that large tracts of country may be traversed without perceiving the impress of the hand of man. The women even, who are regarded as the most beautiful of Italy, are indolent, and their minds evince no activity even in the ordinary duties of life. The inhabitants have all the languor of Asiatic manners.

"Modern Rome limits itself to preserving a certain pre-eminence by virtue of the marvelous works of art which it contains; but we have greatly weakened this claim. Our museum is enriched by all the masterpieces which were a source of so much pride, and soon the magnificent edifice of the Bourse which is to be erected at Paris will eclipse all those of Europe, either ancient or modern.

"France before all.

"Viewed from a political standpoint, how would the papal government in these days appear compared with the great kingdoms of Europe? Formerly mediocre men succeeded to the pontifical throne at an age in which one breathes well only after resting. At this period of life routine and habit are everything; and nothing is considered but the elevated position, and how to make it redound to the advantage of his family. A pope now arrives at sovereign power with a mind sharpened by being accustomed to intrigue, and with a fear of making powerful enemies who may hereafter revenge themselves on his family, since his successor is always unknown. In fine, he cares for nothing but to live and die in peace. In the seat of Sixtus

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From a Drawing by Eug. Lampérius

ARRIVAL OF THE GRAND ARMY AT MOSCOW

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V.[1] how many popes have there been who have occupied themselves only with frivolous subjects, as little advantageous to the best interests of religion as fruitful in inspiring scorn for such a government! But that would lead us too far."[2]

From the time of his return from Moscow, his Majesty occupied himself with unequaled activity in seeking means to arrest the invasion of the Russians, who, having united with the Prussians since General Yorck's defection, constituted a most formidable mass. New levies had been ordered. For two months he had received and utilized the innumerable offers of horses and cavalry made by all the towns of the Empire, by official bodies, and by rich individuals holding positions near the court, etc. The Imperial Guard was reorganized under the brave Duke de Frioul, who was alas! a few months later to be torn from his numerous friends.

In the midst of these grave occupations his Majesty did not for a moment lose sight of his cherished plan of making Paris the most beautiful city of the world; and not a week passed without interviews with architects and engineers, who presented estimates, made reports, etc.

"It is a shame," said the Emperor one day, while inspecting the barracks of the guard, a species of black and

[1] Sixtus V., originally Felix Peretti, born at Montalto, 1525, and in 1585 succeeded Gregory XIII. as pope. He was distinguished by his energy and munificence. He constructed the Vatican Library, the great aqueduct, and other public works, and placed the obelisk before St. Peter's. Died 1589. — TRANS.

[2] This remarkable discourse of his Majesty to Marshal Kellerman has been related in another work; but I take the liberty of reproducing it here, since it so well supports the information I succeeded in obtaining as to the Pope's interview at Fontainebleau described above. — CONSTANT.

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smoke-begrimed shed, "it is a shame," said he to M. Fontaine, "to make buildings as frightful as those of Moscow. I should never have allowed such a building to be erected. Are you not my chief architect?"

M. Fontaine excused himself by pointing out to his Majesty that he was not responsible for the buildings of Paris, as although he had the honor of being chief architect of the Emperor, it was for the Tuileries and the Louvre alone.

"That is true," replied his Majesty; "but could there not be built here," pointing to the quay, "in place of this wooden dockyard, which produces such a bad effect, a residence for the Italian minister?"

M. Fontaine replied that the plan was very feasible, but that it would require three or four millions.

The Emperor then seemed to abandon this idea, and turning his attention to the garden of the Tuileries, perhaps in consequence of the conspiracy of General Malet, gave orders to arrange all the entrances to the palace so that the same key might serve for all the locks; "and this key," his Majesty added, "should be put in charge of the grand marshal after the doors were closed for the night."

A few days after this conversation with M. Fontaine, the Emperor sent to him and M. Costaz the following note, a copy of which fell into my hands. His Majesty had that morning visited the buildings of Chaillot.

"There is yet ample time to discuss the construction of the palace for the King of Rome.

I do not wish to be led into foolish expenditures; I should like a palace not so large as Saint-Cloud, but larger than the Luxemburg.

I wish to be able to occupy it after the sixteenth million has been expended; then it will be a practicable affair. But if a more

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expensive building is attempted, it will result like the Louvre, which has never been finished.

The parks are first to be considered, their boundaries determined and inclosed.

I wish this new palace to be somewhat handsomer than the Élysée; and although that cost less than eight millions, it is one of the most beautiful palaces of Paris.

That of the King of Rome will rank next to the Louvre, which is itself a magnificent palace. It will be, so to speak, only a country seat for one residing in Paris, for of course the winters would be passed at the Louvre or the Tuileries.

I can with difficulty believe that Saint-Cloud cost sixteen millions.

Before inspecting the plan, I wish it to be carefully examined and discussed by the committee on buildings, so that I may have the assurance that the sum of sixteen millions will not be exceeded. I do not wish an ideal residence, but one constructed for my own enjoyment, and not for the pleasure of the architect alone. Finishing the Louvre will suffice for his glory; and when the plan is once adopted, I will see that it is executed.

The Élysée does not suit me, and the Tuileries is barely inhabitable. Nothing will please me unless it is perfectly simple, and constructed according to my tastes and manner of living, for then the palace will be useful to me. I wish it constructed in such a manner that it may be a complete *Sans Souci;*[1] and I especially desire that it may be an agreeable palace rather than a handsome garden, — two conditions which are incompatible. Let there be something between a court and a garden, like the Tuileries, that from my apartments I may promenade in the garden and the park, as at Saint-Cloud, though Saint-Cloud has the inconvenience of having no park for the household.

It is necessary also to study the location, so that my apartments may face north and south, in order that I may change my residence according to the season.

I wish the apartments I occupy to be as handsomely furnished as my small apartments at Fontainebleau.

I wish my apartments to be very near those of the Empress, and on the same floor.

[1] Frederick the Great's palace in the country near Berlin. TRANS.

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Finally, I wish *a palace that would be comfortable for a convalescent, or for a man as age approaches.* I wish a small theater, a small chapel, etc.; and above all great care should be taken that there be no stagnant water around the palace."

The Emperor carried his passion for building to excess, and seemed more active, more eager in the execution of his plans, and more tenacious of his ideas, than any architect I have ever known. Nevertheless, the idea of putting the palace of the King of Rome on the heights of Chaillot was not entirely his own, and M. Fontaine might well claim to have originated it.

It was mentioned the first time while discussing the palace of Lyons, which in order to present a handsome appearance M. Fontaine remarked should be situated on an elevation overlooking the city, as, for example, the heights of Chaillot overlooked Paris. The Emperor did not appear to notice M. Fontaine's remark, and had two or three days previously given orders that the château of Meudon should be put in a condition to receive his son, when one morning he summoned the architect, and ordered him to present a plan for embellishing the Bois de Boulogne, by adding a country house on the summit of Chaillot. "What do you think of it?" added he, smiling; "does the site appear well chosen?"

One morning in the month of March, the Emperor brought his son to a review on the Champ-de-Mars; he was received with indescribable enthusiasm, the sincerity of which was undoubted; and it could easily be seen that these acclamations came from the heart.

The Emperor was deeply moved by this reception, and returned to the Tuileries in a most charming frame of mind, caressed the King of Rome, covered him with kisses,

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and dilated to M. Fontaine and myself on the precocious intelligence displayed by this beloved child. "He was not at all frightened; he seemed to know that all those brave men were my friends." On that day he held a long conversation with M. Fontaine, while amusing himself with his son, whom he held in his arms; and when the conversation turned on Rome and its monuments, M. Fontaine spoke of the Pantheon with the most profound admiration. The Emperor asked if he had ever lived at Rome; and M. Fontaine having replied that he remained there three years on his first visit, his Majesty remarked "It is a city I have not seen; "I shall certainly go there some day. It is the city whose people formerly were the sovereigns of the world." And his eyes were fixed on the King of Rome with paternal pride.

When M. Fontaine had left, the Emperor made me a sign to approach, and began by pulling my ears, according to custom when in good humor. After a few personal questions, he asked me what was my salary. "Sire, six thousand francs." — "And Monsieur Colin, how much has he?" — "Twelve thousand francs." — "Twelve thousand francs! that is not right; you should not have less than M. Colin. I will attend to that." And his Majesty was kind enough to make immediate inquiries, but was told that the accounts for the year were made out; whereupon the Emperor informed me that till the end of the year, M. le Baron Fain[1] would give me each month out of his privy purse five hundred francs, as he wished that my salary should equal that of M. Colin.

[1] Born in Paris, 1778; attended Napoleon in his campaigns as Secretary of the Records; wrote memoirs of the last three years of Napoleon's reign; died 1837. — TRANS.

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## CHAPTER XI.

Murat leaves the army to return to Naples.—Eugène commanding in the Emperor's name.—Headquarters at Posen.—The remains of the army.—The tidings become more and more disquieting.—Resolution to depart.—Rumors circulated in advance.—The Empress regent.—The Empress takes the oath.—We leave for the army.—Rapid march to Erfurt.—Visit to the Duchess of Weimar.—The Emperor gratified by his reception.—The Emperor's household in the campaign of 1813.—The little town of Eckhartsberg transformed into headquarters.—The Emperor in the midst of an unexpected tumult.—Arrival at Lutzen, and battle gained next day.—Death of the Duke of Istria.—Monument erected to the duke by the King of Saxony.—Handsome conduct of the young conscripts.—Opinion of Ney in regard to them.—The Prussians commanded by their king in person.—The Emperor in the midst of the fire.—His Majesty enters Dresden the same day the Emperor Alexander leaves that city.—A deputation and the Emperor's reply.—An explosion, and the Emperor slightly wounded.—Mission of General Flahaut to the King of Saxony.—A long conference between the King of Saxony and the Emperor.—Complaints of the Emperor against his father-in-law.—Congratulations of the Emperor of Austria after the victory.—M. de Bubna at Dresden.—The Emperor takes no repose.—Faculty of sleeping in any place and at all hours.—Battle of Bautzen.—Admirable display of sympathy by the Saxon population.—An animated discussion between the Emperor and Baron Larrey.—Conscripts wounded by carelessness.—The Emperor's injustice admitted by himself.

After the Emperor left the army and committed, as we have seen, the command to the King of Naples, his Sicilian Majesty also abandoned the command intrusted to him, and set out for his states, leaving Prince Eugène at the head of the forces. The Emperor was deeply interested in the news he received from Posen, where the general headquarters were in the latter part of February and

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beginning of March, and where the prince vice-king had under his orders only the remains of different corps, some of which were represented by a very small number of men.

Moreover, each time that the Russians appeared in force, there was nothing to be done but to fall back; and each day during the month of March the news became more and more depressing. The Emperor consequently decided at the end of March to set out at an early day for the army.

For some time previous the Emperor, much impressed by Malet's conspiracy during his last absence, had expressed the opinion that it was dangerous to leave his government without a head; and the journals had been filled with information relative to the ceremonies required when the regency of the kingdom had been left in the hands of queens in times past. As the public well knew the means frequently adopted by his Majesty to foster in advance opinions favorable to any course of conduct he intended to pursue, no one was surprised to see him before leaving confide the regency to the Empress Marie Louise, circumstances not having yet furnished him the opportunity of having her crowned, as he had long desired. The Empress took the solemn oath at the palace of the Élysée, in presence of the princes, great dignitaries, and ministers. The Duke of Cadore was made secretary of the regency, as counselor to her Majesty the Empress, together with the arch-chancellor; and the command of the guard was confided to General Caffarelli.

The Emperor left Saint-Cloud on the 15th of April, at four o'clock in the morning, and at midnight of the 16th entered Mayence. On his arrival his Majesty learned that Erfurt and the whole of Westphalia were in a state of

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the deepest alarm. This news added incredible speed to his march, and in eight hours he was at Erfurt. His Majesty remained but a short while in that town, as the information that he there received set his mind at rest as to the result of the campaign. On leaving Erfurt the Emperor wished to pass through Weimar in order to salute the grand duchess, and made his visit on the same day and at the same hour that the Emperor Alexander went from Dresden to Toeplitz in order to visit another Duchess of Weimar (the hereditary princess, her sister).

The grand duchess received the Emperor with a grace which enchanted him, and their conversation lasted nearly half an hour. On leaving, his Majesty said to the Prince de Neuchâtel, "That is an astonishing woman; she has the intellect of a great man." The Duke accompanied the Emperor as far as the borough of Eckhartsberg, where his Majesty detained him to dine.[1]

[1] NOTE BY CONSTANT.—His Majesty's household, reorganized in part for this campaign of 1813, was composed of the following persons:—

Grand marshal of the palace, the Duke of Frioul.
Grand equerry, the Duke of Vicenza.
*Aides-de-camp:* Generals Mouton, Count de Lobau; Lebrun, Duke de Plaisance;* Generals Drouot, Flahaut, Dejean, Corbineau, Bernard, Durosnel, and Hogendorp.
First ordinance officer, Colonel Gourgaud.
Ordinance officers: Baron de Mortemart, Baron Athalin, M. Béranger, M. de Lauriston; Messieurs Barons Desaix, Laplace, and de Caraman; Messieurs de Saint Marsan, de Lamezan, Pretet, and Pailhou; there was also M. d'Aremberg, but at this time he was a prisoner in the town of Dantzic.
First chamberlain and master of the wardrobe, the Count of Turenne.
Prefect of the palace, Baron de Beausset.
Quartermaster of the palace, Baron de Canouville.
Equerries, Barons Van Lenneps, Montaran, and de Mesgrigny.
Private secretaries, Baron Mounier and Baron Fain.
Clerks, Messieurs Jouanne and Prévost.
Secretary interpreters, Messieurs Lelorgue, Dideville, and Vouzowitch.
Director of the topographical bureau, Baron Bacler d'Albe.
Geographical engineers, Messieurs Lameau and Duvivier.
Pages, Messieurs Montarieu, Devienne, Sainte Perne, and Ferreri.

* He did not succeed his father as Duke till 1824.—TRANS.

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The Emperor had his headquarters on the square of Eckhartsberg. He had only two rooms, and his suite slept on the landing and the steps of the staircase. This little town, transformed in a few hours into headquarters, presented a most extraordinary spectacle. On a square surrounded by camps, bivouacs, and military parks, in the midst of more than a thousand vehicles, which crossed each other from every direction, mingled together, became entangled in every way, could be seen slowly defiling regiments, convoys, artillery trains, baggage wagons, etc. Following them came herds of cattle, preceded or divided by the little carts of the canteen women and sutlers,—such light, frail vehicles that the least jolt endangered them; with these were marauders returning with their booty, peasants pulling vehicles by their own strength, cursing and swearing amid the laughter of our soldiers; and couriers, ordinance officers, and *aides-de-camp*, galloping through all this wonderfully variegated and diversified multitude of men and beasts.

And when to this is added the neighing of horses, bellowing of cattle, rumbling of wheels over the stones, cries of the soldiers, sounds from trumpets, drums, fifes, and the complaints of the inhabitants, with hundreds of persons all together asking questions at the same time, speaking German to the Italians, and French to the Germans, how could it be possible that his Majesty should be as tranquil and as much at his ease in the midst of this fearful uproar as in his cabinet at Saint-Cloud or the Tuileries? This was nevertheless the case; and the Emperor, seated before a miserable table covered with a kind of cloth, a map spread before him, compass and pen in hand, entirely given up to

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meditation, showed not the least impatience; and it would have been said that no exterior noise reached his ears. But let a cry of pain be heard in any direction, the Emperor instantly raised his head, and gave orders to go and ascertain what had happened.

The power of thus isolating one's self completely from all the surrounding world is very difficult to acquire, and no one possessed it to the same degree as his Majesty.

On the 1st of May the Emperor was at Lutzen, though the battle did not occur till next day. On that day, at six o'clock in the evening, the brave Marshal Bessières, Duke of Istria, was killed by a cannon-ball, just at the moment when, mounted on a height, wrapped in a long cloak which he had put on in order not to be remarked, he had just given orders for the burial of a sergeant of his escort, whom a ball had just slain a few steps in front of him.

From the first campaigns in Italy the Duke of Istria had hardly left the Emperor at all; had followed him in all his campaigns; had taken part in all his battles, and was always distinguished for his well-proved bravery, and a frankness and candor very rare among the high personages by whom his Majesty was surrounded. He had passed through almost all grades up to the command of the Imperial Guard; and his great experience, excellent character, good heart, and unalterable attachment to the Emperor, had rendered him very dear to his Majesty.

The Emperor was much moved on learning of the death of the marshal, and remained some time silent with bent head, and eyes fastened on the ground. At last he said, "He has died like Turenne; his fate is to be envied." He then passed his hand over his eyes and withdrew.

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The body of the marshal was embalmed and carried to Paris, and the Emperor wrote the following letter to the Duchess of Istria:—

"My Cousin, —

Your husband has died on the field of honor. The loss sustained by you and your children is doubtless great, but mine is greater still. The Duke of Istria has died a most glorious death, and without suffering. He leaves a stainless reputation, the richest heritage he could have left his children. My protection is assured, and they will also inherit the affection I bore their father. Find in all these considerations some source of consolation in your distress, and never doubt my sentiments towards you.

This letter having no other object, I pray that God, my cousin, may have you in his holy keeping.

Napoleon."

The King of Saxony reared a monument to the Duke of Istria on the exact spot where he fell. The victory so long disputed in this battle of Lutzen was on that account only the more glorious for the Emperor, and was gained principally by the young conscripts, who fought like lions. Marshal Ney expected this of them; for before the battle he said to his Majesty, "Sire, give me a good many of those young men, I will lead them wherever I wish. The old bearded fellows know as much as we, they reflect, they are too cold blooded; but these intrepid children know no difficulties, they look straight before them, and neither to the right nor left."

In fact, in the midst of the battle, the Prussians, commanded by the king in person, attacked the corps of Marshal Ney with such fury that it fell back, but the conscripts did not take flight. They withstood the fire, rallied by platoons, and flanked the enemy, crying with all their might,

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"*Vive l'Empereur.*" The Emperor appeared; and recovering from the terrible shock they had sustained, and electrified by the presence of their hero, they attacked in their turn with incredible violence. His Majesty was astonished. "In the twenty years," said he, "I have commanded French armies I have never witnessed such remarkable bravery and devotion."

It was indeed a touching sight to see those youthful soldiers, although grievously wounded, some without an arm, some without a leg, with but a few moments of life remaining, making a last effort, as the Emperor approached, to rise from the ground, and shout with their latest breath, "*Vive l'Empereur.*" Tears fill my eyes as I think of those youths, so brilliant, so strong, and so courageous.

The enemy displayed the same bravery and enthusiasm. The light infantry of the Prussian guard were almost all young men who saw fire for the first time; they exposed themselves to every hazard, and fell by hundreds before they would recoil a step.

In no other battle, I think, was the Emperor so visibly protected by his destiny. Balls whistled around his ears, carrying away as they passed pieces of the trappings of his horse, shells and grenades rolled at his feet, but nothing touched him. The soldiers observed this, and their enthusiasm rose to the highest pitch.

At the beginning of the battle, the Emperor saw a battalion advancing whose chief had been suspended from his office two or three days before for some slight breach of discipline. The disgraced officer marched in the second rank with his soldiers, by whom he was adored. The Emperor saw him, and halting the battalion, took the officer by

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the hand, and placed him again at the head of his troop. The effect produced by this scene was indescribable.

On the 8th of May, at seven o'clock in the evening, the Emperor entered Dresden, and took possession of the palace, which the Emperor of Russia and King of Prussia had quitted that very evening. A short distance from the barriers the Emperor was saluted by a deputation from the municipality of that town.

"You deserve," said he to these deputies, "that I should treat you as a conquered country. I know all that you have done while the allies occupied your town; I have a statement of the number of volunteers whom you have clothed, equipped, and armed against me, with a generosity which has astonished even the enemy. I know the insults you have heaped on France, and how many shameless libels you have to suppress or to burn to-day. I am fully aware with what transports of joy you received the Emperor of Russia and the King of Prussia within your walls. Your houses are still decorated with the garlands, and we still see lying on the earth the flowers which the young girls scattered in their path. Nevertheless, I am willing to pardon everything. Thank your king for this; it is he who saves you, and I pardon you only from love of him. Send a deputation to entreat him to return to you. My *aide-de-camp*, General Durosnel, will be your governor. Your good king himself could not make a better selection."

As soon as he entered the city the Emperor was informed that a part of the Russian rear guard sought to hold its ground in the new town, separated from the old by the river Elbe, and had fallen into the power of our army.

His Majesty immediately ordered that everything should be done in order to drive out this remnant of the enemy; and during an entire day there was a continued cannonad-

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ing and shooting in the town from one bank to the other. Bullets and shell fell like hail on the spot occupied by the Emperor. A shell struck the walls of a powder-magazine not far from him, and scattered the pieces around his head, but fortunately the powder did not ignite. A few moments after another shell fell between his Majesty and several Italians; they bent to avoid the explosion. The Emperor saw this movement, and laughingly said to them, "*Ah, coglioni! non fa male.*" [1]

On the 11th of May, in the morning, the Russians were put to flight and pursued, the French army entering the city from all sides. The Emperor remained on the bridge the whole day, watching his troops as they filed in. The next day at ten o'clock the Imperial Guard under arms were placed in line of battle on the road from Pirna to Gross Garten. The Emperor reviewed it, and ordered General Flahaut to advance.

The King of Saxony arrived about noon. On meeting again, the two sovereigns alighted from their horses and embraced each other, and then entered Dresden amid general acclamations.

General Flahaut, who had gone to meet the King of Saxony with a part of the Imperial Guard, received from this good king the most flattering testimonials of appreciation and gratitude. It is impossible to show more cordiality and friendliness than the King of Saxony displayed. The Emperor said of him and his family that they were a patriarchal family, and that all who comprised it joined to striking virtues an expansive kindness of manner which made them adored by their subjects. His Majesty paid

[1] "Ah, scamps! don't behave badly." —TRANS.

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this royal personage the most affectionate attentions, and as long as the war lasted sent couriers each day to keep the king informed of the least circumstance. He came himself as often as possible, and, in fact, constantly treated him with that cordiality he so well knew how to display and to render irresistible when he chose.

A few days after his arrival at Dresden his Majesty held a long conversation with the King of Saxony, in which the Emperor Alexander was the principal subject of conversation.

The characteristics and faults of this prince were fully analyzed; and the conclusion drawn from this conversation was that the Emperor Alexander had been sincere in the interview at Erfurt, and that it must have been very complicated intrigues which had thus led to the rupture of all their treaties of friendship. "Sovereigns are most unfortunate," said his Majesty; "always deceived, always surrounded by flatterers or treacherous counselors, whose greatest desire is to prevent the truth from reaching the ears of their masters, who have so much interest in knowing it."

The two sovereigns next spoke of the Emperor of Austria. His Majesty appeared profoundly grieved that his union with the Archduchess Marie Louise, whom he did all in his power to render the happiest of women, should have failed in producing the result he had anticipated, of obtaining for him the confidence and friendship of her father. "It is perhaps because I was not born a sovereign," said the Emperor; "and neverthe ess, I should think that this would be an additional inducement to the friendship of my father-in-law. I shall never be convinced that

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such ties are not strong enough to obtain the alliance of the Emperor of Austria; for, in fact, I am his son-in-law, my son is his grandson, he loves his daughter, and she is happy; how, then, can he be my enemy?"

On learning of the victory of Lutzen, and the entrance of the Emperor into Dresden, the Emperor of Austria hastened to send M. de Bubna to his son-in-law. He arrived on the evening of the 16th; and the interview, which his Majesty immediately granted, lasted until two hours after midnight. This led us to hope that peace was about to be concluded, and we consequently formed a thousand conjectures, each more encouraging than the other; but when two or three days had passed away, and we still witnessed only preparations for war, we saw that our hopes were cruelly deceived. Then it was I heard the unfortunate Marshal Duroc exclaim, "This is lasting too long! We will none of us outlive it." He had a presentiment of his own death.

During the whole of this campaign the Emperor had not a moment of repose. The days passed away in combats or marches, always on horseback; the nights in labors in the cabinet. I never comprehended how his body could endure such fatigue, and yet he enjoyed almost continuously the most perfect health. The evening before the battle of Bautzen he retired very late, after visiting all the military posts, and, having given all necessary orders, slept profoundly. Early next morning, the 20th of May, movements began, and we awaited at headquarters with eager impatience the results of this day. But the battle was not over even then; and after a succession of encounters, always ending in our favor, although hotly contested, the

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Emperor, at nine o'clock in the evening, returned to headquarters, took a light repast, and remained with Prince Berthier until midnight. The remainder of the night was passed in work, and at five o'clock in the morning he was on his feet and ready to return to the combat. Three or four hours after his arrival on the battlefield the Emperor was overcome by an irresistible desire for sleep, and, foreseeing the issue of the day, slept on the side of a ravine, in the midst of the batteries of the Duke of Ragusa, until he was awaked with the information that the battle was gained.

This fact, which was related to me in the evening, did not astonish me in the least; for I have already remarked that when he was compelled to yield to the necessity of sleep, that imperious want of nature, the Emperor took the repose which was so necessary to him when and where he could, like a true soldier.

Although the result was decided, the battle was continued until five o'clock in the evening. At six o'clock the Emperor had his tent erected near a solitary inn, which had served as headquarters for the Emperor Alexander during the two preceding days. I received orders to attend him there, and did so with all speed; but his Majesty, nevertheless, passed the whole night receiving and congratulating the chief generals, and working with his secretaries.

All the wounded who were able to march were already on the road to Dresden, where all necessary help awaited them. But on the field of battle were stretched more than ten thousand men, — Frenchmen, Russians, Prussians, etc.,—hardly able to breathe, mutilated, and in a most pitiable condition. The unremitting labors of the kind and

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indefatigable Baron Larrey and the multitude of surgeons encouraged by his heroic example did not suffice even to dress their wounds. And what means could be found to remove the wounded in this desolate country, where all the villages had been sacked and burned, and where it was no longer possible to find either horses or conveyances? Must they then let all these men perish after most horrible sufferings, for lack of means to convey them to Dresden?

It was then that this population of Saxon villagers, who it might have been thought must be embittered by the horrors of war,—in seeing their dwellings burned, their fields ravaged,—furnished to the army an example of the sublime sentiments which pity can inspire in the heart of man. They perceived the cruel anxiety which M. Larrey and his companions suffered concerning the fate of so many unfortunate wounded, and immediately men, women, children, and even old men, hastily brought wheelbarrows. The wounded were lifted, and placed on these frail conveyances. Two or three persons accompanied each wheelbarrow all the way to Dresden, halting if by a cry or gesture even, the wounded indicated a desire to rest, stopping to replace the bandages which the motion had displaced, or near a spring to give them water to allay the fever which devoured them. I have never seen a more touching sight.

Baron Larrey had an animated discussion with the Emperor. Among the wounded, there were found a large number of young soldiers with two fingers of their right hand torn off; and his Majesty thought that these poor young fellows had done it purposely to keep from serving. Having said this to M. Larrey, the latter vehemently exclaimed that it was an impossibility, and that such base-

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ness was not in keeping with the character of these brave young conscripts. As the Emperor still maintained his position, Larrey at length became so angry that he went so far as to tax the Emperor with injustice. Things were in this condition when it was positively proved that these uniform wounds came from the haste with which these young soldiers loaded and discharged their guns, not being accustomed to handling them. Whereupon his Majesty saw that M. de Larrey was right, and praised him for his firmness in maintaining what he knew to be the truth. "You are a thoroughly good man, M. de Larrey," said the Emperor. "I wish I could be surrounded only with men like you; but such men are very rare."

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## CHAPTER XII.

Death of Marshal Duroc. — Grief of the Emperor and general consternation in the army. — Particulars of this fatal event. — Impatience of the Emperor on being unable to overtake the rear guard of the Russians. — Two or three cannon-balls dig up the ground at the Emperor's feet. — A number of the guard killed near his Majesty. — Announcement of the death of General Bruyères. — Duroc near the Emperor. — A tree struck by a shell. — The Duke of Plaisance announces, weeping, the death of the grand marshal. — Death of General Kirgener. — Assiduous but useless attentions. — The marshal still breathing. — The Emperor's adieux to his friend. — Indescribable consternation. — The Emperor motionless and abstracted. — *To-morrow everything.* — The Russians completely routed. — Death of the grand marshal. — Funeral inscription dictated by the Emperor. — Land bought and agreement violated. — Our entrance into Silesia. — Perfect self-possession of the Emperor. — His Majesty directs the troops himself. — The march on Breslau. — The Emperor on a pillaged farm. — A fire destroys forty baggage-wagons. — A fictitious anecdote denied. — The Emperor neglects nothing. — Entrance into Breslau. — A prediction almost fulfilled. — Armistice of the 4th of June. — Stay at Gorlitz. — Losses generously repaid. — Return to Dresden. — Rumors dissipated by the Emperor's presence. — The Marcolini palace. — The Emperor living as he did at Schoenbrunn. — The French comedy ordered to Dresden. — The composition of the troupe. — Theater of the Orangery and comedy. — Tragedy at Dresden. — Employment of the Emperor's days. — Distractions and Mademoiselle Georges. — Talma and Mademoiselle Mars breakfasting with the Emperor. — Happy repartee and the Emperor's politeness. — Abundance diffused through Dresden by the presence of his Majesty. — Camps around the town. — The Emperor's *fête* advanced five days. — The soldiers at the *Te Deum*.

We had now reached the eve of the day on which the Emperor, still deeply affected by the loss he had sustained in the death of the Duke of Istria, was to receive a blow which he felt perhaps most keenly of all those which struck deep into his heart as he saw his old companions in arms

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fall around him. The day following that on which the Emperor had, with Baron Larrey, the discussion which I related at the end of the preceding chapter was made memorable by the irreparable loss of Marshal Duroc. The Emperor's heart was crushed; and indeed not one of us failed to shed sincere tears — so just and good was he, although grave and severe in his manner towards persons whom the nature of their duties brought into contact with him. It was a loss not only to the Emperor, who possessed in him a true friend, but, I dare to assert, also to the whole of France. He loved the Emperor with a passionate devotion, and never failed to bestow on him his faithful admonitions, although they were not always heeded. The death of Marshal Duroc was an event so grievous and so totally unexpected, that we remained for some time uncertain whether to believe it, even when the only too evident reality no longer permitted us to remain under any delusion.

These are the circumstances under which this fatal event occurred which spread consternation throughout the army: The Emperor was pursuing the rear guard of the Russians, who continually eluded him, and had just escaped for the tenth time since the morning, after having killed and taken prisoners large numbers of our brave soldiers, when two or three shells dug up the ground at the Emperor's feet, and caused him to exclaim, "What! after such butchery no result! no prisoners! those men there will not leave me a nail." Hardly had he finished speaking when a shell passed, and threw a chasseur of the cavalry escort almost under the legs of his Majesty's horse. "Ah, Duroc," added he, turning towards the grand marshal, "fortune protects us to-day." — "Sire," said an *aide-de-camp*, rushing

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up at a gallop, "General Bruyères[1] has just been killed." — "My poor comrade of Italy! Is it possible? Ah! it is necessary to push on, nevertheless." And noticing on the left an elevation from which he could better observe what was passing, the Emperor started in that direction amidst a cloud of dust. The Duke of Vicenza, the Duke of Treviso, Marshal Duroc, and general of engineers Kirgener followed his Majesty closely; but the wind raised such a cloud of dust and smoke that they could hardly see each other. Suddenly a tree near which the Emperor passed was struck by a shell and cut in half. His Majesty, on reaching the plateau, turned to ask for his field-glass, and saw no one near him except the Duke of Vicenza. Duke Charles de Plaisance came up, his face showing a mortal pallor, leaned towards the grand equerry, and said a few words in his ear. "What is it?" vehemently inquired the Emperor; "what has happened?" — "Sire," said the Duke of Plaisance, weeping, "the grand marshal is dead!" — "Duroc? But you must be mistaken. He was here a moment ago by my side." Several *aides-de-camp* arrived, and a page with his Majesty's field-glass. The fatal news was confirmed, in part at least. The Grand Duke of Frioul was not yet dead; but the shell had wounded him in the stomach, and all surgical aid would be useless. The shell after breaking the tree had glanced, first striking General Kirgener,[2] who was instantly killed, and then the Duke of Frioul. Monsieurs Yvan and Larrey were with the wounded marshal, who had been carried into a house at Markersdorf. There was no hope of saving him.

[1] Jean Paul Bruyères born in Languedoc, 1772; made general at Jéna, 1806; served under Murat in Russian campaign, 1812. — TRANS.

[2] Joseph Kirgener, born in Paris, 1766. — TRANS.

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The consternation of the army and his Majesty's grief on this deplorable event were indescribable. He mechanically gave a few orders and returned to camp, and when he had reached the encampment of the guard, seated himself on a bench in front of his tent, with lowered head and clasped hands, and remained thus for nearly an hour without uttering a word. Since it was nevertheless essential that orders should be given for the next day, General Drouot[1] approached, and in a voice interrupted by sobs asked what should be done. "To-morrow, everything," replied the Emperor, and said not a word more. "Poor man!" exclaimed the old watchdogs of the guard; "he has lost one of his children." Night closed in. The enemy was in full retreat; and the army having taken its position, the Emperor left the camp, and, accompanied by the Prince de Neuchâtel, M. Yvan, and the Duke of Vicenza, repaired to the house where the grand marshal had been conveyed. The scene was terrible. The Emperor, distracted with grief, repeatedly embraced this faithful friend, endeavoring to cheer him; but the duke, who was perfectly conscious of his condition, replied only by entreaties to have opium given him. At these words the Emperor left the room; he could no longer control his emotions.

The Duke de Frioul died next morning; and the Emperor ordered that his body should be conveyed to Paris,

[1] Count Antoine Drouot, chief of artillery of the guard, born at Nancy, 1774; fought as captain at Hohenlinden, 1800; distinguished himself at Wagram (1809) and Borodino (1812); made general of division at Bautzen, 1813; went to Elba as commander of the guard, and was by the Emperor's side at Waterloo; died in 1847. He was a Protestant, and was often seen during heavy firing reading his Testament calmly. — TRANS.

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and placed under the dome of the Invalides.[1] He bought the house in which the grand marshal died, and charged the pastor of the village to have a stone placed in the spot where his bed had stood, and these words engraved thereon: —

"HERE GENERAL DUROC, DUKE OF FRIOUL,
GRAND MARSHAL OF THE PALACE OF THE EMPEROR NAPOLEON,
MORTALLY WOUNDED BY A SHELL,
DIED IN THE ARMS OF HIS FRIEND, THE EMPEROR."

The preservation of this monument was imposed as an obligation on the occupant of the house, who received it as a gift with this condition annexed. The pastor, the magistrate of the village, and the one who accepted this gift, were summoned to his Majesty's presence; and he made known to them his wishes, which they solemnly engaged to fulfill. His Majesty then drew from his privy purse the necessary funds, and handed them to these gentlemen.

It is well that the reader should know how this agreement so solemnly made was executed. This order of the Russian staff will inform him.

"A copy of a receipt dated the 16th (28th) of March states that the Emperor Napoleon handed to Hermann, pastor of the church at Markersdorf, the sum of two hundred gold napoleons for the purpose of erecting a monument to the memory of Marshal Duroc, who died on the field of battle. His Excellency Prince Repnin, Governor-General of Saxony, having ordered that a deputy from my office be sent to Markersdorf in order to bring the said sum and deposit it with me until it is finally disposed of, my secretary, Meyerheim, is charged with this mission, and consequently will go at once to Markersdorf, and, as an evidence of his authority, will present to Minister Hermann

[1] On either side of the entrance to the sarcophagus of porphyry which holds the mortal remains of the great Emperor, rest Duroc and Bertrand, who in life watched over him as marshals of his Palace. — TRANS.

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From a Painting by E. Meissonier

RETREAT FROM MOSCOW—"1812"

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the accompanying order, and take possession of the above mentioned sum of two hundred gold napoleons. The secretary Meyerheim will account to me alone for the execution of this order. At Dresden this 20th of March (1st of April), 1814.

(Signed) BARON DE ROSEN."

This order needs no comment. After the battles of Bautzen and Wurschen, the Emperor entered Silesia. He saw on every occasion combined armies of the allies put to flight before his own in every encounter; and this sight, while flattering his vanity exceedingly, also greatly strengthened him in the belief that he would soon find himself master of a rich and fertile country, where the abundant means of subsistence would be of much advantage in all his undertakings. Many times a day he exclaimed, "How far are we from such a town? When do we arrive at Breslau?" His impatience did not prevent him meanwhile from occupying his mind with every object which struck his attention, as if he were free from all care. He examined the houses, one by one, as he passed through each village, remarked the direction of rivers and mountain ranges, and collected the most minute information which the inhabitants could or would give him. On the 27th of May, his Majesty, when not more than three days march from Breslau, met in front of a little town called Michelsdorf several regiments of Russian cavalry who held the road. They were quite near the Emperor and his staff before his Majesty had even perceived them. The Prince de Neuchâtel, seeing the enemy so near, hastened to the Emperor, and said, "Sire, they are still advancing."—"Well, we will advance also," replied his Majesty, smiling. "Look behind you." And he showed the prince the French infantry approaching in close columns. A few discharges

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soon drove the Russians from this position; but half a league or a league farther we found them again, and this maneuver was again and again repeated. The Emperor, perceiving this, maneuvered accordingly, and in person directed with the greatest precision the troops as they advanced. He went from one height to another, and thoroughly inspected the towns and villages on the route in order to reconnoiter their position, and ascertain what resources he could obtain from the country; and, as a result of his attentive care and indefatigable oversight, the scene changed ten times a day. If a column emerged from a deep ravine, a wood, or a village, it could take immediate possession of a height, since a battery was found already in position to defend it. The Emperor indicated every movement with admirable tact, and in such a manner that it was impossible to be taken at a disadvantage. He commanded only the troops as a whole, transmitting either personally, or through his staff officers, his orders to the commander of the corps and divisions, who in their turn transmitted or had them transmitted to the chiefs of battalions. All orders given by his Majesty were short, precise, and so clear that it was never necessary to ask explanations.

On the 29th of May, not knowing how far on the road to Breslau it was prudent to advance, his Majesty established himself on a little farm called Rosnig, which had been pillaged, and presented a most miserable aspect. As there could be found in the house only a small apartment with a closet suitable for the Emperor's use, the Prince de Neuchâtel and his suite established themselves as well as they could in the surrounding cottages, barns, and even in the gardens, since there was not sufficient

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shelter for all. The next day a fire broke out in a stable near the lodging of the Emperor. There were fourteen or fifteen wagons in this barn, which were all burned. One of these wagons contained the traveling treasury chest; in another were the clothes and linen belonging to the Emperor, as well as jewelry, rings, tobacco boxes, and other valuable objects. We saved very few things from this fire; and if the reserve corps had not arrived promptly, his Majesty would have been obliged to change his customary toilet rules for want of stockings and shirts. The Saxon Major d'Odeleben, who has written some interesting articles on this campaign, states that everything belonging to his Majesty was burned; and that it was necessary to have him some pantaloons made in the greatest haste at Breslau. This is a mistake. I do not think that the baggage-wagon was burned; but even if it had been, the Emperor would not on that account have needed clothing, since there were always four or five complete suits either in advance or in the rear of the headquarters. In Russia, when the order was given to burn all carriages which lacked horses, this order was rigorously executed in regard to the persons of the household, and they were consequently left with almost nothing; but everything was reserved which might be considered indispensable to his Majesty.

At length on the 1st of June, at six o'clock in the morning, the advance guard entered Breslau, having at its head General Lauriston, and General Hogendorp,[1]

[1] Count Dyrk van Hogendorp, a Dutch general, born at Rotterdam, 1761; minister of war to King Louis Bonaparte. In 1811, general of division, and aide to the Emperor, whom he accompanied in the Russian campaign. After Waterloo he went to Brazil, where he died in 1830. — TRANS.

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whom his Majesty had invested in advance with the functions of governor of this town, which was the capital of Silesia. Thus was fulfilled in part the promise the Emperor had made in passing through Warsaw on his return from Russia: "I go to seek three hundred thousand men. Success will render the Russians bold. I will deliver two battles between the Elbe and the Oder, and in six months I will be again on the Niemen."

These two battles fought and gained by conscripts, and without cavalry, had re-established the reputation of the French army. The King of Saxony had been brought back in triumph to his capital. The headquarters of the Emperor were at Breslau; one of the corps of the grand army was at the gates of Berlin, and the enemy driven from Hamburg. Russia was about to be forced to withdraw into its own boundaries, when the Emperor of Austria, acting as mediator in the affairs of the two allied sovereigns, advised them to propose an armistice. They followed this advice; and as the Emperor had the weakness to consent to their demands, the armistice was granted and signed on the fourth of June, and his Majesty at once set out on his return to Dresden. An hour after his departure he said, "If the allies do not in good faith desire peace, this armistice may become very fatal to us."

On the evening of the 8th of June, his Majesty reached Gorlitz. On that night fire broke out in the faubourg where the guard had established its quarters; and at one o'clock one of the officials of the town came to the headquarters of the Emperor to give the alarm, saying that all was lost. The troops extinguished the fire, and

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an account was rendered the Emperor of what had occurred. I dressed him in all haste, as he wished to set out at break of day. "To how much does the loss amount?" demanded the Emperor. "Sire, to seven or eight thousand francs at least for the cases of greatest need."—"Let ten thousand be given, and let it be distributed immediately." The inhabitants were immediately informed of the generosity of the Emperor; and as he left the village an hour or two after, he was saluted with unanimous acclamations.

On the morning of the 10th we returned from Dresden. The Emperor's arrival put an end to most singular rumors which had been circulated there since the remains of Grand Marshal Duroc had passed through the city. It was asserted that the coffin contained the body of the Emperor; that he had been killed in the last battle, and his body mysteriously concealed in a room of the château, through the windows of which lights could be seen burning all night. When he arrived, some persons perfectly infatuated with this idea went so far as to repeat what had already been reported, with the added circumstance that it was not the Emperor who was seen in his carriage, but a figure made of wax. Nevertheless, when next day he appeared before the eyes of all on horseback in a meadow in front of the gates of the city, they were compelled to admit that he still lived.

The Emperor alighted at the Marcolini palace, a charming summer residence situated in the faubourg of Friedrichstadt. An immense garden, the beautiful meadows of Osterwise on the banks of the Elbe, in addition to an extremely fine landscape, rendered this sojourn much more

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attractive than that of the winter palace; and consequently the Emperor was most grateful to the King of Saxony for having prepared it for him. There he led the same life as at Schoenbrunn; reviews every morning, much work during the day, and few distractions in the evening; in fact, more simplicity than display. The middle of the day was spent in cabinet labors; and during that time such perfect tranquillity reigned in the palace, that except for the presence of two sentinels on horseback and videttes, which showed that it was the dwelling of a sovereign, it would have been difficult to imagine that this beautiful residence was inhabited even by the simplest private citizen.

The Emperor had chosen for his apartments the right wing of the palace; the left was occupied by the Prince de Neuchâtel. In the center of the building were a large saloon and two smaller ones which served as reception rooms.

Two days after his return, his Majesty sent orders to Paris that the actors of the "Comedy" Theater from Paris should spend the time of the armistice at Dresden. The Duke of Vicenza, charged in the interim with the duties of grand marshal of the palace, was ordered to make all necessary preparations to receive them. He committed this duty to the care of Messieurs de Beausset and de Turenne, to whom the Emperor gave the superintendence of the theater; and a hall to be used for this purpose was erected in the orangery of the Marcolini palace. This hall communicated with the apartments, and could seat about two hundred persons. It was erected as if by magic, and was opened, while awaiting the arrival

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of the French troupe, with two or three representations given by the Italian comedians of the King of Saxony.

The actors from Paris were: For tragedy, Messieurs Saint-Prix and Talma and Mademoiselle Georges.

For comedy: Messieurs Fleury, Saint-Fal, Baptiste the younger, Armand, Thénard, Michot, Devigny, Michelot and Barbier; Mesdames Mars, Bourgoin, Thénard, Émilie Contat, and Mézeray.

The management of the theater was given to M. Després.

All these actors arrived on the 19th of June, and found every arrangement made for their comfort, — tastefully furnished lodgings, carriages, servants, everything which could enable them to agreeably endure the ennui of a residence in a foreign land, and prove to them at the same time how highly his Majesty appreciated their talents; an appreciation which most of them richly merited, both on account of their excellent social qualities, and the nobility and refinement of their manners.

The *début* of the French troupe at the theater of the Orangery took place on the 22d of June, in the *Gageure Imprévue*, and another piece, then much in vogue at Paris, and which has often since been witnessed with much pleasure, *La Suite d'un Bal Masqué*.

As the theater of the Orangery would have been too small for the representation of tragedy, that was reserved for the grand theater of the city; and persons were admitted on those occasions only by cards from the Count of Turenne, no admission fee being charged.

At the grand theater on the days of the French play, and also in the theater at the Marcolini palace, the footmen

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of his Majesty attended upon the boxes, and served refreshments while the piece was being played.

This is how the days were spent after the arrival of the actors of the French theater.

Everything was quiet until eight o'clock in the morning, unless a courier arrived, or some *aide-de-camp* was unexpectedly summoned. At eight o'clock I dressed the Emperor; at nine he held his *levée*, which all could attend who held as high a rank as colonel. The civil and military authorities of the country were also admitted; the Dukes of Weimar and d'Anhalt, the brothers and nephews of the King of Saxony, sometimes attended. Next came breakfast; then the parade in the meadows of Osterwise, about one hundred paces distant from the palace, to which the Emperor always went on horseback, and dismounted on arriving; the troops filed before him, and cheered him three times with their customary enthusiasm. The evolutions were commanded sometimes by the Emperor, sometimes by the Count of Lobau. As soon as the cavalry began to defile, his majesty re-entered the palace and began to work. Then began that perfect stillness of which I have spoken; and dinner was not served until late,—seven or eight o'clock. The Emperor often dined alone with the Prince de Neuchâtel, unless there were guests from the royal family of Saxony. After dinner they attended the theater, when there was a play; and afterwards the Emperor returned to his cabinet to work again, either alone or with his secretaries.

Each day it was the same thing, unless, which was very rarely the case, fatigued beyond measure by the labors of the day, the Emperor took a fancy to send for Madame

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Georges after the tragedy. Then she passed two or three hours in his apartment, but never more.

Sometimes the Emperor invited Talma or Mademoiselle Mars to breakfast. One day, in a conversation with this admirable actress, the Emperor spoke to her concerning her *début*. "Sire," said she, in that graceful manner which every one remembers, "I began very young. I slipped in without being perceived." — "Without being perceived!" replied his Majesty quickly; "you are mistaken. Be assured moreover, Mademoiselle, that I have always, in common with all France, highly appreciated your wonderful talents."

The Emperor's stay at Dresden brought wealth and abundance. More than six million francs of foreign money were spent in this city between the 8th of May and 16th of November, if one can believe the statements published on Saxon authority of the number of lodgings distributed. This sojourn was a harvest of gold, which keepers of boarding-houses, hotels, and merchants carefully reaped. Those in charge of military lodgings furnished by the inhabitants also made large profits. At Dresden could be seen Parisian tailors and bootmakers, teaching the natives to work in the French style. Even bootblacks were found on the bridges over the Elbe, crying, as they had cried on the bridges of the Seine, "Shine your boots!"

Around the city numerous camps had been established for the wounded, convalescents, etc. One of these, called the Westphalian camp, presented a most beautiful scene. It was a succession of beautiful small gardens; there a fortress made of turf, its bastions crowned with hortensias; here a plot had been converted into a terrace, its walks

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ornamented with flowers, like the most carefully tended parterre; on a third was seen a statue of Pallas. The whole barrack was decked with moss, and decorated with boughs and garlands which were renewed each day.

As the armistice would end on the 15th of August, the *fête* of his Majesty was advanced five days. The army, the town, and the court had made extensive preparations in order that the ceremony might be worthy of him in whose honor it was given. All the richest and most distinguished inhabitants of Dresden vied with each other in balls, concerts, festivities, and rejoicings of all sorts. The morning before the day of the review, the King of Saxony came to the residence of the Emperor with all his family, and the two sovereigns manifested the warmest friendship for each other. They breakfasted together, after which his Majesty, accompanied by the King of Saxony, his brothers and nephews, repaired to the meadow behind the palace, where fifteen thousand men of the guard awaited him in as fine condition as on the most brilliant parades on the Champ-de-Mars.

After the review, the French and Saxon troops dispersed through the various churches to hear the *Te Deum;* and at the close of the religious ceremony, all these brave soldiers seated themselves at banqueting tables already prepared, and their joyous shouts with music and dancing were prolonged far into the night.

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## CHAPTER XIII.

Desire for peace. — The honor of our arms restored. — Difficulties raised by the Emperor Alexander. — Mediation of Austria. — Time lost. — Departure from Dresden. — Fine appearance of the French army. — England the soul of the coalition. — The stipulations of Lunéville. — The nation in arms in Prussia. — Retrospection. — Incidents of the stay at Dresden. — The Duke of Otranto with the Emperor. — Unfounded suspicions. — Recollections of the Malet conspiracy. — Fouché governor-general of Illyria. — The Emperor's high opinion of the talents of the Duke of Otranto. — Devotion of the Duke of Rovigo. — Arrival of the King of Naples. — Evident coolness of the Emperor. — Dresden fortified, and extent of the fortifications. — The maps and rehearsal of battles. — Our journey to Mayence. — Death of the Duke of Abrantes. — The Emperor's regrets. — Short interview with the Empress. — The Emperor three days in his cabinet. — Expiration of the armistice. — The *fête* of Saint-Napoleon advanced five days. — The French comedy and play *gratis* at Dresden. — The day of dinners. — *Fête* at the residence of General Durosnel. — Baptiste junior and my Lord Bristol. — The French infantry divided into fourteen corps. — Six grand divisions of cavalry. — The guard of honor. — Composition and strength of the hostile armies. — Two foreigners against one Frenchman. — The Emperor's mistaken feeling of security in regard to Austria. — Declaration of war. — The count of Narbonne.

THE entire duration of the armistice was employed in negotiations tending to a treaty of peace, which the Emperor ardently desired, especially since he had seen the honor of his army restored on the fields of Lutzen and Bautzen; but unfortunately he desired it only on conditions to which the enemy would not consent, and soon the second series of our disasters recommenced, and rendered peace more and more impossible. Besides, from the beginning of negotiations relative to the armistice, whose limit

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we had now nearly reached, the emperor Alexander, notwithstanding the three battles won by Napoleon, would listen to no direct proposals from France, except on the sole condition that Austria should act as mediator. This distrust, as might be expected, did not tend to produce a final reconciliation, and, being the conquering party, the Emperor was naturally irritated by it; nevertheless, under these grave circumstances he conquered the just resentment caused by the conduct of the Emperor of Russia towards himself. The result of the time lost at Dresden, like the prolongation of our sojourn at Moscow, was a great advantage to the enemy.

All hopes of a peaceful adjustment of affairs now having vanished, on the 15th of August the Emperor ordered his carriage; we left Dresden, and the war recommenced. The French army was still magnificent and imposing, with a force of two hundred thousand infantry, but only forty thousand cavalry, as it had been entirely impossible to repair completely the immense loss of horses that had been sustained. The most serious danger at that time arose from the fact that England was the soul of the coalition of Russia, Prussia, and Sweden against France. Her subsidies having obtained her the supreme control, nothing could be decided without consulting her; and I have since learned that even during the pretended negotiations the British government had declared to the Emperor of Russia that under the circumstances the conditions of the treaty of Lunéville would be far too favorable to France. All these complications might be expressed in these words: "We desire war!" War was then waged, or rather the scourge continued to desolate Germany, and soon threatened and in-

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vaded France. I should, moreover, call attention to the fact that what contributed to render our position extremely critical in case of reverses was that Prussia waged on us not simply a war of regular armies, but that it had now assumed the character of a national war, by the calling out of the *landwehr* and *landsturm* which made the situation far more dangerous than against the tactics of the best disciplined army. To so many other complications was added the fear, soon only too well justified, of seeing Austria from an inoffensive and unbiased mediator become a declared enemy.

Before going farther, I deem it best to refer again to two or three occurrences I have inadvertently omitted which took place during our stay at Dresden previous to what might be called the second campaign of 1813. The first of these was the appearance at Dresden of the Duke of Otranto, whom his Majesty had summoned.

He had been very rarely seen at the Tuileries since the Duke of Rovigo had replaced him as minister of general police; and I noticed that his presence at headquarters was a great surprise to every one, as he was thought to be in complete disgrace. Those who seek to explain the causes of the smallest events think that his Majesty's idea was to oppose the subtle expedients of the police under M. Fouché to the then all-powerful police of the Baron de Stein, the armed head of all the secret parties which were forming in every direction, and which were regarded, not without reason, as the rulers of popular opinion in Prussia and Germany, and, above all, in the numerous schools, where the students were only awaiting the moment for taking up arms. These conjectures as to M. Fouché's presence at Dresden

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were without foundation. The Emperor in recalling him had a real motive, which he, however, disguised under a specious pretext. Having been deeply impressed by the conspiracy of Malet, his Majesty thought that it would not be prudent to leave at Paris during his absence a person so discontented and at the same time so influential as the Duke of Otranto; and I heard him many times express himself on this subject in a manner which left no room for doubt. But in order to disguise this real motive, the Emperor appointed M. Fouché governor of the Illyrian provinces in place of Count Bertrand, who was given the command of an army-corps, and was soon after appointed to succeed the adorable General Duroc in the functions of grand marshal of the palace. Whatever the justice of this distrust of Fouché, it is very certain that few persons were so well convinced of the superiority of his talents as a police officer as his Majesty himself. Several times when anything extraordinary occurred at Paris, and especially when he learned of the conspiracy of Malet, the Emperor, recalling in the evening what had impressed him most deeply during the day, ended by saying, "This would not have happened if Fouché had been minister of police!" Perhaps this was undue partiality; for the Emperor assuredly never had a more faithful and devoted servant than the Duke of Rovigo, although many jests were made in Paris over his custom of punishing by a few hours imprisonment.

Prince Eugène having returned to Italy at the beginning of the campaign in order to organize a new army in that country, we did not see him at Dresden; the King of Naples, who had arrived on the night of the 13th or 14th

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of August presented himself there almost alone; and his contribution to the grand army consisted of only the small number of Neapolitan troops he had left there on his departure for Naples.

I was in the Emperor's apartment when the King of Naples entered, and saw him for the first time. I did not know to what cause to attribute it, but I noticed that the Emperor did not give his brother-in-law as cordial a welcome as in the past. Prince Murat said that he could no longer remain idle at Naples, knowing that the French army to which he still belonged was in the field, and he asked only to be allowed to fight in its ranks. The Emperor took him with him to the parade, and gave him the command of the Imperial Guard; and a more intrepid commander would have been difficult to find. Later he was given the general command of the cavalry.

During the whole time of the armistice, spun out rather than filled with the slow and useless conferences of the Congress of Prague, it would be impossible to describe the various labors in which the Emperor occupied himself from morning till evening, and often far into the night. He could frequently be seen bending over his maps, making, so to speak, a rehearsal of the battles he meditated. Nevertheless, greatly exasperated by the slowness of the negotiations as to the issue of which he could no longer delude himself, he ordered, shortly before the end of July, that everything should be prepared and in readiness for a journey he intended making as far as Mayence. He made an appointment to meet the Empress there; and as she was to arrive on the 25th, the Emperor consequently arranged his departure so as to arrive only a short time after. I recall

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this journey only as a fact, since it was signalized by nothing remarkable, except the information the Emperor received at this time of the death of the Duke of Abrantes, who had just succumbed at Dijon to a violent attack of his former malady. Although the Emperor was already aware that he was in a deplorable state of mental alienation, and must consequently have expected this loss, he felt it none the less sensibly, and sincerely mourned his former *aide-de-camp*.

The Emperor remained only a few days with the Empress, whom he met again with extreme pleasure. But as important political considerations recalled him, he returned to Dresden, visiting several places on his route, and the 4th of August we returned to the capital of Saxony. Travelers who had seen this beautiful country only in a time of peace would have recognized it with difficulty. Immense fortifications had metamorphosed it into a warlike town; numerous batteries had been placed in the suburbs overlooking the opposite bank of the Elbe. Everything assumed a warlike attitude, and the Emperor's time became so completely and entirely absorbed that he remained nearly three days without leaving his cabinet.

Nevertheless, in the midst of the preparations for war all arrangements were made to celebrate on the 10th of August the Emperor's *fête*, which had been advanced five days, because, as I have previously observed, the armistice expired precisely on the anniversary of Saint-Napoleon; and, as may be readily inferred from his natural passion for war, the resumption of hostilities was not an addition to his *fête* which he would be likely to disdain.

There was at Dresden, as had been customary at Paris,

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a special representation at the theater on the evening before the Emperor's *fête*. The actors of the French theater played two comedies on the 9th at five o'clock in the evening; which representation was the last, as the actors of the French Comedy received orders immediately afterwards to return to Paris. The next day the King of Saxony, accompanied by all the princes of the royal family, repaired at nine o'clock in the morning to the Marcolini palace, in order to pay his respects to the Emperor; after which a grand morning reception was held as was the custom at the Tuileries, and a review, at which the Emperor inspected a part of his guard, several regiments, and the Saxon troops, who were invited to dine by the French troops. On that day the city of Dresden without much exaggeration might have been compared to a great dining-hall. In fact, while his Majesty was dining in state at the palace of the King of Saxony, where the whole family of this prince was assembled, the entire diplomatic corps was seated at the table of the Duke of Bassano; Baron Bignon,[1] envoy from France to Warsaw, feasted all the distinguished Poles present in Dresden; Count Daru gave a grand dinner to the French authorities; General Friant to the French and Saxon generals; and Baron de Serra, minister from France to Dresden, to the chiefs of the Saxon colleges. This day of dinings was concluded by a supper for nearly two hundred guests, which General Henri Durosnel, Governor of Dresden, gave that evening at the close of a magnificent ball at the residence of M. de Serra.

On our return from Mayence to Dresden I learned that

[1] Born at La Meilleraye, 1771; minister to Baden, 1809; created a peer, 1837; author of a history of France; died 1841.—TRANS.

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the residence of General Durosnel was the *rendezvous* of all the highest circles of society, both Saxon and French. During the absence of his Majesty, the general, taking advantage of this leisure, gave numerous *fêtes*, among others one to the actors and actresses of French Comedy. I recall in this connection an amusing anecdote which was related to me at the time. Baptiste junior, with no lack either of decorum or refinement, contributed greatly to the amusement of the evening, being presented under the name of my Lord Bristol, English diplomat, *en route* to the Council of Prague. His disguise was so perfect, his accent so natural, and his phlegm so imperturbable, that many persons of the Saxon court were completely deceived, which did not in the least astonish me; and I thereby saw that Baptiste junior's talent for mystification had lost nothing since the time when I had been so highly diverted at the breakfasts of Colonel Beauharnais. How many events had occurred since that time!

The Emperor, seeing that nothing could longer delay the resumption of hostilities, had consequently divided the two hundred thousand men of his infantry into fourteen army corps, the command of which was given to Marshals Victor, Ney, Marmont, Augereau, Macdonald, Oudinot, Davoust, and Gouvion Saint-Cyr,[1] Prince Poniatowski, and Generals Reynier,[2] Rapp, Lauriston, Vandamme, and Ber-

[1] Marshal Gouvion Saint-Cyr was then the junior marshal of the Empire in date of appointment, having received the marshal's baton on the battle-field during the campaign of Moscow, after the combat of the 18th of August. —CONSTANT.

[2] Jean Louis Reynier, born at Lausanne, 1771; chief of staff to Moreau, 1796; commanded at Acre, 1799, and in 1807 King Joseph's army. Taken prisoner at Leipzig, 1813, and died 1814.—TRANS.

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trand. The forty thousand cavalry formed six grand divisions under the command of Generals Nansouty, Latour-Maubourg, Sebastiani, Arrighi, Milhaud, and Kellermann; and, as I have already said, the King of Naples had the command of the Imperial Guard. Moreover, in this campaign appeared for the first time on our fields of battle the guard of honor, a select troop recruited from the richest and most distinguished families, and which had been increased to more than ten thousand men, divided into two divisions under the simple title of regiments; one of which was commanded by General Count of Pully, and the other, if I am not mistaken, by General Segur.[1] These youths, but lately idlers given up to repose and pleasure, became in a short time most excellent cavalry, which signalized itself on various occasions, notably at the battle of Dresden, of which I shall soon have occasion to speak.

The strength of the French army has been previously stated. The combined army of the allies amounted to four hundred and twenty thousand infantry, and its cavalry to hardly less than one hundred thousand, without counting a reserve army corps of eighty thousand Russians, in readi ness to leave Poland under the command of General Ben ingsen. Thus the enemy's army outnumbered ours in the proportion of two to one.

At the time we entered into this campaign, Austria had just declared war openly against us. This blow, although not unexpected, struck the Emperor deeply, and he expressed himself freely in regard to it before all persons

[1] Count Philip Segur, born in Paris, 1780; author of the well-known history of the campaign in Russia; died 1873, having survived that campaign, in which he had been chief of the Imperial staff, more than sixty years. — TRANS.

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who had the honor to approach him. M. de Metternich, I have heard it stated, had almost certainly forewarned him of this in the last interviews this minister had at Dresden with his Majesty; but the Emperor had been entirely unable to bring himself to the belief that the Emperor of Austria would make common cause with the coalition of the north against his own daughter and grandson. Finally all doubts were solved by the arrival of Count Louis de Narbonne,[1] who was returning from Prague to Dresden, as bearer of a declaration of war from Austria. Every one foresaw that France must soon count among its enemies all the countries no longer occupied by its troops, and results justified this prediction only too well. Nevertheless, everything was not lost, for we had not yet been compelled to take the defensive.

[1] Born in Parma, 1755; in the Revolution acted with the Constitutional party, and became minister of war in 1791; dismissed from office, 1792, and proscribed, but escaped to England; returned to France, 1800; lieutenant-general and minister to Bavaria, 1809; *aide-de-camp* to the Emperor in Russian campaign (1812), and died 1813. — TRANS.

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## CHAPTER XIV.

The Emperor marching to conquer a peace. — The day following the departure, and the field of battle at Bautzen. — Murat at the head of the Imperial Guard, and refuses royal honors. — The Emperor at Gorlitz. — Interview with the Duke of Vicenza. — The gage of peace or war. — Blücher in Silesia. — Violation of the armistice by Blücher. — General Jomini at the headquarters of the Emperor Alexander. — Anecdote of the Duke of Vicenza. — First news of the presence of Moreau. — General Jomini is presented to Moreau. — Mutual coldness and the Emperor's opinion. — The Emperor's prediction concerning deserters. — The two traitors. — Changes in the plans of the Emperor. — Movements at headquarters. — Murat's mission to Dresden. — The Emperor's instructions to General Gourgaud. — Dresden threatened, and consternation of the inhabitants. — General Gourgaud's report. — Resolve to defend Dresden. — General Haxo sent to General Vandamme. — Orders carefully given. — The Emperor on the bridge at Dresden. — The city reassured by his presence. — Fine appearance of the cuirassiers of Latour-Maubourg. — A great battle. — The Emperor more exposed than he had ever been. — The Emperor wet to the skin. — I find great difficulty in undressing him. — The only attack of fever his Majesty had during the time I knew him. — The day after the victory. — The Emperor's escort as brilliant as at the Tuileries. — Grenadiers spend the night in cleaning their arms. — News from Paris. — Letters personal to me. — Lawsuit between Michel and Reynier. — The Empress leaves for Cherbourg. — The Emperor's attentions to the Empress. — Efforts to make her popular. — Newspapers substituted for the bulletins. — Reading the daily papers.

WAR recommenced before negotiations were finally broken, for the Duke of Vicenza was still in communication with M. de Metternich. The Emperor, as he mounted his horse, said to the numerous generals surrounding him that he now marched to conquer a peace. But what hope could remain after the declaration of war by Austria, and above all, when it was known that the allied sovereigns

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had incessantly increased their pretensions in proportion as the Emperor granted the concessions demanded? The Emperor left Dresden at five o'clock in the afternoon, advancing on the road to Koenigstein, and passed the next day at Bautzen, where he revisited the battlefield, the scene of his last victory. There the king of Naples, who did not wish royal honors to be rendered himself, came to rejoin the Emperor at the head of the Imperial Guard, who presented as imposing an appearance as in its pristine days.

We arrived at Gorlitz on the 18th, where the Emperor found the Duke of Vicenza, who was returning from Bohemia. He confirmed the truth of the report his Majesty had already received at Dresden, that the Emperor of Austria had already decided to make common cause with the Emperor of Russia and the Kings of Prussia and Sweden against the husband of his daughter, the princess whom he had given to the Emperor as a pledge of peace. It was also through the Duke of Vicenza that the Emperor learned that General Blücher had just entered Silesia at the head of an army of one hundred thousand men, and, in violation of most sacred promises, had seized on Breslau the evening before the day fixed for the rupture of the armistice. This same day General Jomini,[1] Swiss by birth, but until recently in the service of France, chief of staff to Marshal Ney, and loaded with favors by the Emperor, had deserted his post, and reported at the headquarters of the Emperor Alexander, who had welcomed him with demonstrations of most intense satisfaction.

[1] Baron Henri Jomini, author of the celebrated treatise on the art of war, was born in the Canton de Vaud, 1779; *aide-de-camp* to Ney, 1804; distinguished himself in several battles, and on his desertion was made lieutenant-general and *aide* to Emperor Alexander; died 1869. —TRANS.

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The Duke of Vicenza gave the particulars of this desertion, which seemed to affect his Majesty more than all the other news. He told him, among other things, that when General Jomini had entered the presence of Alexander, he found this monarch surrounded by his chiefs, among whom Moreau was pointed out to him. This was the first information the Emperor had received of General Moreau's presence at the enemy's headquarters. The Duke of Vicenza added, that when the Emperor Alexander presented General Jomini to Moreau the latter saluted him coolly, and Jomini replied only by a slight inclination of his head, and retired without uttering a word, and the remainder of the evening remained in gloomy silence in a corner of the saloon opposite to that occupied by General Moreau. This constraint had not escaped the Emperor Alexander's observation; and the next morning, as he was making his toilet, he addressed Marshal Ney's ex-chief of staff: "General Jomini," said he, "what is the cause of your conduct yesterday? It seems to me that it would have been agreeable to you to meet General Moreau." — "Anywhere else, Sire." — "What!" — "If I had been born a Frenchman, like the general, I should not be to-day in the camp of your Majesty." When the Duke of Vicenza had finished his report to the Emperor, his Majesty remarked with a bitter smile, "I am sure that wretch Jomini thinks he has performed a fine action! Ah, Caulaincourt, these desertions will destroy me!" Perhaps Moreau, in welcoming General Jomini so coldly, was actuated by the thought that were he still serving in the French army he would not have betrayed it with arms in his hand; and after all it is not an unusual thing to see

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two traitors each blush for the other, deluding themselves at the same time in regard to their own treachery, not comprehending that the sentiments they feel are the same as those they inspire.

However that may be, the news which M. de Caulaincourt brought caused the Emperor to make some changes in his plans for the campaign. His Majesty entirely abandoned the idea of repairing in person to Berlin, as he had expressed his intention of doing, and, realizing the necessity of ascertaining first of all the contemplated operations of the grand army of Austria, commanded by the Prince of Schwarzenberg, penetrated into Bohemia; but learning through the couriers of the army and his spies that eighty thousand Russians still remained on the opposite side with a considerable body of the Austrian army, he retraced his steps after a few engagements in which his presence decided the victory, and on the 24th we found ourselves again at Bautzen. His Majesty from this place sent the King of Naples to Dresden, in order to restore the courage of the King of Saxony and the inhabitants when they should find the enemy at the gates of their city. The Emperor sent them the assurance that the enemy's forces would not enter, since he had returned to defend its approaches, and urged them at the same time not to allow themselves to be dismayed by any sudden or unexpected attack made by isolated detachments. Murat arrived at a most opportune moment, for we learned later that consternation had become general in the city; but such was the prestige attached to the Emperor's assurances that all took courage again on learning of his presence.

After the King of Naples had gone to fulfill this mis-

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sion, Colonel Gourgaud was called during the morning into the Emperor's tent, where I then was. "I will be to-morrow on the road to Pirna," said his Majesty; "but I shall halt at Stolpen. As for you, hasten to Dresden; go with the utmost speed; reach it this night. Interview on your arrival the King of Naples, Durosnel, the Duke of Bassano, and Marshal Gouvion Saint-Cyr; reassure them all. See also the Saxon minister Gersdorf. Say to him that you could not see the king because you set out in such haste; but that I can to-morrow bring forty thousand men into Dresden, and that I am preparing to enter with all the army. Next day you will see the commandant of the engineering corps; you will visit the redoubts and the fortifications of the town; and when you have inspected everything, you will return quickly and meet me at Stolpen. Report to me exactly the real state of affairs, as well as the opinion of Marshal Saint-Cyr and the Duke of Bassano. Set out." The colonel left immediately at a gallop, though he had eaten nothing as yet that day.

The next evening at eleven o'clock, Colonel Gourgaud[1] returned to the Emperor, after performing all the requirements of his mission. Meanwhile the allied army had descended into the plain of Dresden, and had already made some attacks upon the advance posts. It resulted from information given by the colonel that when the King of Naples arrived, the city, which had been in a state of complete demoralization, now felt that its only hope was in the Emperor's arrival.

In truth, hordes of Cossacks were already in sight of the

[1] Baron Gaspard Gourgaud, born at Versailles, 1783; accompanied Napoleon to St. Helena; created a peer of France, 1841; died 1852. — TRANS.

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faubourgs, which they threatened to attack; and their appearance had compelled the inhabitants of these faubourgs to take refuge in the interior of the city. "As I left," said Colonel Gourgaud, "I saw a village in flames half a league from the great gardens, and Marshal Gouvion Saint-Cyr was preparing to evacuate that position. "But after all," said the Emperor eagerly, "what is the opinion of the Duke of Bassano?" — "Sire, the Duke of Bassano does not think that we can hold out twenty-four hours." — "And you?" — "I, Sire? I think that Dresden will be taken to-morrow if your Majesty is not there." — "I can then rely upon what you tell me?" — "Sire, I will answer for it with my head."

Then his Majesty summoned General Haxo,[1] and said to him, his finger on the map, "Vandamme is advancing by way of Pirna beyond the Elbe. The eagerness of the enemy in penetrating as far as Dresden has been extreme. Vandamme will find himself in his rear. I intend to sustain his movement with my whole army; but I am uneasy as to the fate of Dresden, and am not willing to sacrifice that city. I can reach it in a few hours, and I shall do so, although it grieves me much to abandon a plan which if well executed might furnish the means of routing all the allies at one blow. Happily Vandamme is still in sufficient strength to supplement the general movement by attacks at special points which will annoy the enemy. Order him, then, to go from Pirna to Ghiesubel, to gain the defiles of Peterswalde, and when intrenched in this

[1] Born at Lunéville, 1774; directed the operations at Saragossa, 1809; general of division in Russian campaign (1812); was at Waterloo. In 1832 conducted the siege of Antwerp as chief engineer; died 1838.—TRANS.

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impregnable position, to await the result of operations under the walls of Dresden. *I reserve for him the duty of receiving the swords of the vanquished.* But in order to do this it is necessary that he should keep his wits about him, and pay no attention to the tumult made by the terrified inhabitants. Explain to General Vandamme exactly what I expect of him. Never will he have a finer opportunity to gain the marshal's baton."

General Haxo set out instantly; and the Emperor made Colonel Gourgaud re-enter his apartment, and ordered him to take a fresh horse, and return to Dresden more quickly than he had come, in order to announce his arrival. "The old guard will precede me," said his Majesty. "I hope that they will have no more fear when they see that."

On the morning of the 26th the Emperor was seated on his horse on the bridge of Dresden, and began, amid cries of joy from both the young and old guard, to make dispositions for the terrible battle which lasted three days.

It was ten o'clock in the morning when the inhabitants of Dresden, now reduced to despair, and speaking freely of capitulation, witnessed his Majesty's arrival. The scene changed suddenly; and to the most complete discouragement succeeded most entire confidence, especially when the haughty cuirassiers of Latour-Maubourg defiled over the bridge, holding their heads high, and their eyes fixed on the neighboring hillsides covered by the enemy's lines. The Emperor immediately alighted at the palace of the king, who was preparing to seek an asylumn in the new town, but whose intentions were changed by the arrival of this great man. The interview was extremely touching.

I cannot undertake to describe all the occurrences of

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those memorable days, in which the Emperor covered himself with glory, and was more exposed to danger than he had ever been at any time. Pages, equerries, and *aides-de-camp* fell dead around him, balls pierced the stomach of his horse, but nothing could touch him. The soldiers saw this and redoubled their ardor, and also their confidence and admiration. I shall simply state that the Emperor did not re-enter the château until midnight, and then spent the hours until daylight dictating orders, while promenading up and down the room with great strides, until at break of day he remounted his horse. The weather was horrible, and the rain lasted the whole day. In the evening, the enemy being completely routed, the Emperor returned to the palace in a frightful condition. From the time he mounted his horse, at six o'clock in the morning, the rain had not ceased a single instant, and he was so wet that it could be said without any figure of speech that the water ran down into his boots from the collar of his coat, for they were entirely filled with it. His hat of very fine beaver was so ruined that it fell down over his shoulders, his buff belt was perfectly soaked with water; in fact a man just drawn out of the river would not be wetter than the Emperor. The King of Saxony, who awaited him, met him in this condition, and embraced him as a cherished son who had just escaped a great danger; and this excellent prince's eyes were full of tears as he pressed the saviour of his capital to his heart. After a few reassuring and tender words from the Emperor, his Majesty entered his apartments, leaving everywhere traces of the water which dripped from every part of his clothing, and I had much difficulty in undressing him. Knowing that

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the Emperor greatly enjoyed a bath after a fatiguing day, I had it prepared; but as he felt unusually fatigued, and in addition to this began to shiver considerably, his Majesty preferred retiring to his bed, which I hurriedly warmed. Hardly had the Emperor retired, however, than he had Baron Fain, one of his secretaries, summoned to read his accumulated correspondence, which was very voluminous. After this he took his bath, but had remained in it only a few moments when he was seized with a sudden sickness accompanied by vomiting, which obliged him to retire to bed.

His Majesty said to me, "My dear Constant, a little rest is absolutely indispensable to me; see that I am not awaked except for matters of the gravest importance; say this to Fain." I obeyed the Emperor's orders, after which I took my position in the room in front of his Majesty's chamber, watching with the attention of a sentinel on duty lest he should be awakened, or any one should even approach his apartment.

The next morning the Emperor rang very early, and I entered his room immediately, anxious to know how he had passed the night. I found him almost entirely restored, and in fine spirits. He told me, however, that he had had a short attack of fever. I must here remark that it was the only time the Emperor had fever, and during the whole time I was with him I never saw him ill enough to keep his bed for twenty-four hours. He rose at his usual hour, and when he descended was intensely gratified by the fine appearance made by the battalion on duty. Those brave grenadiers, who the evening before had served as his escort, and re-entered Dresden with him in a most pitiable condi-

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tion, this morning he saw ranged in the court of the palace in splendid condition, and bearing arms as brilliant as if it were a day of parade on the Place du Carrousel. These brave fellows had spent the night polishing their arms, and drying themselves around great fires which they had kindled for the purpose, having thus preferred the satisfaction of presenting themselves in faultless condition before their Emperor's eyes to the sleep and rest which they must so greatly have needed.

One word of approbation repaid them for their fatigue, and it may be truly said never was a military chief so much beloved by his soldiers as his Majesty.

The last courier who had returned from Paris to Dresden, and whose dispatches were read, as I have said, to the Emperor, bore several letters for me written by my family and two or three of my friends; and all who have accompanied his Majesty on his campaigns, in whatever rank or employment, well know how we valued news received from home. These letters informed me, I remember, of a famous lawsuit going on in the court of assizes between the banker Michel and Reynier, which scandalous affair caused much comment in the capital, and almost divided with the news from the army the interest and attention of the public; and also of the journey the Empress was about to make to Cherbourg, to be present at the opening of the dikes, and filling the harbor with water from the ocean. This journey, as may well be imagined, had been suggested by the Emperor, who sought every opportunity of putting the Empress forward, and making her perform the duties of a sovereign, as regent of the Empire. She summoned and presided over the council of ministers, and more than

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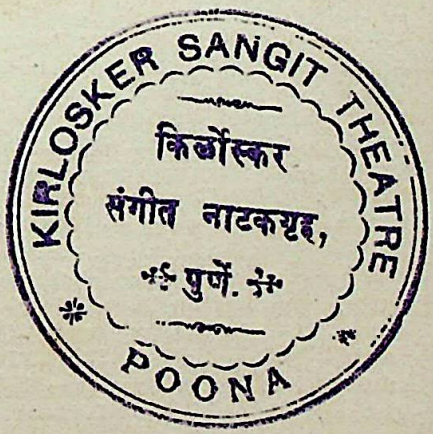
once I heard the Emperor congratulate himself after the declaration of war with Austria that *his Louise*, as he called her, acted solely for the interests of France, and had nothing Austrian but her birth. He also allowed her the satisfaction of herself publishing and in her own name all the official news of the army. The bulletins were no longer issued; but the news was transmitted to her all ready for publication, which was doubtless an attention on the part of his Majesty in order to render the Empress Regent more popular, by making her the medium of communication between the government and the public. Moreover, it is a fact, that we who were on the spot, although we knew at once whether the battle was gained or lost, often did not know the entire operations of the different corps maneuvering on an immense line of battle, except through the journals of Paris; and our eagerness to read them may well be imagined.

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## CHAPTER XV.

Prodigies of valor performed by the King of Naples. — His striking appearance on the battlefield. — The effect produced by his presence. — Description of the king. — His horse. — The Emperor praises the King of Naples. — Increasing prudence of certain generals. — The Emperor on the battlefield of Dresden. — Humanity towards the wounded, and aid given the poor peasants. — An important personage wounded on the enemy's staff. — Details given the Emperor by a peasant. — The Prince of Schwarzenberg thought to be dead. — His Majesty's words. — Fatalism and recollections of the ball at Paris. — The Emperor mistaken. — Inscription on the collar of a dog sent to the Prince of Neuchâtel. — *I belong to General Moreau.* — Death of Moreau. — Particulars of his last moments as given by his *valet de chambre.* — The bullet found. — Resolution taken to march on Berlin. — Fatal news of the catastrophe of General Vandamme. — Noble words of the Emperor. — Painful resignation of his Majesty. — Final departure for Dresden. — Marshal Saint-Cyr. — The King of Saxony and his family accompany the Emperor. — Exhortation to the Saxon troops. — Enthusiasm and treachery. — The *Château* at Düben. The Emperor's plans known to the army. — The times much changed. — Dissatisfaction of the generals openly expressed. — Defection of the Bavarians. — Increased discouragement. — Sadness of the stay at Düben. — Two days of solitude and indecision. — Apathetic idleness of the Emperor. — The Emperor yielding to the generals. — Departure for Leipzig. — General joy of the staff. — Marshal Augereau alone of the Emperor's opinion. — The Emperor's hopes deceived. — Resolution of the allies not to fight unless the Emperor is absent. — Short stay at Leipzig. — Proclamation of the Prince Royal of Sweden to the Saxons. — M. Moldrecht and the Emperor's clemency. — M. Leborgne d'Ideville. — Leipzig the center of the war. — Three of the enemy to one Frenchman. — Two hundred thousand discharges of cannon in five days. — Ammunition exhausted. — The retreat ordered. — The Emperor and Prince Poniatowski. — Indignation of the King of Saxony against his troops, and consolation given by the Emperor. — His Majesty in imminent danger. — Last and touching adieux of the two sovereigns.

DURING the second day of the battle of Dresden, at the end of which the Emperor had the attack of fever I

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From a Drawing by L. Marin

DEPARTURE OF NAPOLEON FOR PARIS

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mentioned in the preceding chapter, the King of Naples, or rather Marshal Murat, performed prodigies of valor. Much has been said of this truly extraordinary prince; but only those who saw him personally could form a correct idea of him, and even they never knew him perfectly until they had seen him on a field of battle. There he seemed like those great actors who produce a complete illusion amid the fascinations of the stage, but in whom we no longer find the hero when we encounter them in private life. While at Paris I attended a representation of the death of Hector by Luce de Lancival, and I could never afterwards hear the verses recited in which the author describes the effect produced on the Trojan army by the appearance of Achilles without thinking of Prince Murat; and it may be said without exaggeration that his presence produced exactly this effect the moment he showed himself in front of the Austrian lines. He had an almost gigantic figure, which alone would have sufficed to make him remarkable, and in addition to this sought every possible means to draw attention to himself, as if he wished to dazzle those who might have intended to attack him. His regular and strongly marked features, his handsome blue eyes rolling in their orbits, enormous mustaches, and black hair falling in long ringlets over the collar of a *kurtka* with narrow sleeves, struck the attention at first sight. Add to this the richest and most elegant costume which one would wear even at the theater, — a Polish coat richly embroidered, and encircled by a gilded belt from which hung the scabbard of a light sword, with a straight and pointed blade, without edge and without guard; large amaranth-colored pantaloons embroidered in gold on the seams, and

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nankeen boots; a large hat embroidered in gold with a border of white feathers, above which floated four large ostrich plumes with an exquisite heron aigrette in the midst; and finally the king's horse, always selected from the strongest and handsomest that could be found, was covered with an elegantly embroidered sky-blue cloth which extended to the ground, and was held in place by a Hungarian or Turkish saddle of the richest workmanship, together with a bridle and stirrups not less magnificent than the rest of the equipment. All these things combined made the King of Naples a being apart, an object of terror and admiration. But what, so to speak, *idealized* him was his truly chivalrous bravery, often carried to the point of recklessness, as if danger had no existence for him. In truth, this extreme courage was by no means displeasing to the Emperor; and though he perhaps did not always approve of the manner in which it was displayed, his Majesty rarely failed to accord it his praise, especially when he thought necessary to contrast it with the increasing prudence shown by some of his old companions in arms.

On the 28th the Emperor visited the battlefield, which presented a frightful spectacle, and gave orders that everything possible should be done to alleviate the sufferings of the wounded, and also of the inhabitants and peasants who had been ravaged and pillaged, and their fields and houses burned, and then ascended the heights from which he could follow the course of the enemy's retreat. Almost all the household followed him in this excursion. A peasant was brought to him from Nothlitz, a small village where the Emperor Alexander and the King of Prussia had their headquarters during the two preceding days. This peas-

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ant, when questioned by the Duke of Vicenza, said he had seen a great personage brought into Nothlitz, who had been wounded the evening before on the staff of the allies. He was on horseback, and beside the Emperor of Russia, at the moment he was struck. The Emperor of Russia appeared to take the deepest interest in his fate. He had been carried to the headquarters of Nothlitz on lances of the Cossacks interlaced, and to cover him they could find only a cloak wet through with the rain. On his arrival at Nothlitz the Emperor Alexander's surgeon came to perform the amputation, and had him carried on an extending chair to Dippoldiswalde, escorted by several Austrian, Prussian, and Russian detachments.

On learning these particulars the Emperor was persuaded that the Prince von Schwarzenberg was the person in question. "He was a brave man," said he; "and I regret him." Then after a silent pause, "It is then he," resumed his Majesty, "who is the victim of the fatality! I have always been oppressed by a feeling that the events of the ball were a sinister omen, but it is very evident now that it was he whom the presage indicated."

While the Emperor gave himself up to these conjectures, and recalled his former presentiments, prisoners who were brought before his Majesty had been questioned; and he learned from their reports that the Prince von Schwarenzberg had not been wounded, but was well, and was directing the retreat of the Austrian grand army. Who was, then, the important personage struck by a French cannon-ball? Conjectures were renewed on this point, when the Prince de Neuchâtel received from the King of Saxony a collar unfastened from the neck of a wandering

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dog which had been found at Nothlitz. On the collar was written these words, "I belong to General Moreau." This furnished, of course, only a supposition; but soon exact information arrived, and confirmed this conjecture.

Thus Moreau met his death the first occasion on which he bore arms against his native country, — he who had so often confronted with impunity the bullets of the enemy. History has judged him severely; nevertheless, in spite of the coldness which had so long divided them, I can assert that the Emperor did not learn without emotion the death of Moreau, notwithstanding his indignation that so celebrated a French general could have taken up arms against France, and worn the Russian cockade. This unexpected death produced an evident effect in both camps, though our soldiers saw in it only a just judgment from Heaven, and an omen favorable to the Emperor. However that may be, these are the particulars, which I learned a short time after, as they were related by the *valet de chambre* of General Moreau.

The three sovereigns of Russia, Austria, and Prussia had been present on the 27th at the battle on the heights of Nothlitz, but had retired as soon as they saw that the battle was lost. That very day General Moreau was wounded by a cannon-ball near the intrenchments in front of Dresden, and about four o'clock in the afternoon was conveyed to Nothlitz, to the country house of a merchant named Salir, where the Emperors of Austria and Russia had established their headquarters. Both limbs of the general were amputated above the knee. After the amputation, as he requested something to eat and a cup of tea, three eggs were brought him on a plate; but he took only

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the tea. About seven o'clock he was placed on a litter, and carried to Passendorf by Russian soldiers, and passed the night in the country house of M. Tritschier, grand master of forests. There he took only another cup of tea, and complained greatly of the sufferings he endured. The next day, the 28th of August, at four o'clock in the morning, he was conveyed, still by Russian soldiers, from Passendorf to Dippodiswalde, where he took a little white bread and a glass of lemonade at the house of a baker named Watz. An hour after he was carried nearer to the frontiers of Bohemia, borne by Russian soldiers in the body of a coach taken off the wheels. During the entire route he incessantly uttered cries which the extremity of his sufferings drew from him.

These are the details which I learned in regard to Moreau; and, as is well known, he did not long survive his wound. The same ball which broke both his legs carried off an arm from Prince Ipsilanti, then *aide-de-camp* to the Emperor Alexander; so that if the evil that is done can be repaired by the evil received, it might be said that the cannon-shot which tore away from us General Kirgener and Marshal Duroc was this day sent back on the enemy. But alas! it is a sad sort of consolation that is drawn from reprisals.

It may be seen from the above, and especially from the seemingly decisive benefits arising from the battle of Dresden, that since the resumption of hostilities, in every place where our troops had been sustained by the all-powerful presence of the Emperor, they had obtained successes; but unfortunately this was not the case at points distant from the main line of operations. Nevertheless, seeing the

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allies routed by the army which he commanded in person, and certain, moreover, that General Vandamme had held the position which he had indicated to him through General Haxo, his Majesty returned to his first idea of marching on Berlin, and already even had disposed his troops with this intention, when the fatal news arrived that Vandamme, the victim of his own rashness, had disappeared from the field of battle, and his ten thousand men, surrounded on all sides, and overwhelmed by numbers, had been cut to pieces. It was believed that Vandamme was dead, and it was not until later we learned that he had been taken prisoner with a part of his troop. It was learned also that Vandamme, incited by his natural intrepidity, and unable to resist a desire to attack the enemy whom he saw within his grasp, had left his intrenchments to make the attack. He had conquered at first, but when after his victory he attempted to resume his former position he found it occupied, as the Prussians had seized it; and though he fought with all the abandon of despair, it was all in vain, and General Kleist,[1] proud of this fine trophy, conducted him in triumph to Prague. It was while speaking of this audacious attack of Vandamme that the Emperor used this expression, which has been so justly admired, "For a retreating enemy it is necessary to make a bridge of gold, or oppose a wall of brass." The Emperor heard with his usual imperturbability the particulars of the loss he had just experienced, but nevertheless repeatedly expressed his astonishment at the deplorable recklessness of Vandamme, and said he could not comprehend how this

[1] Count Emil Friedrich Kleist, born in Berlin, 1762; field marshal, 1821, and commander-in-chief in Saxony; died 1823.—TRANS.

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experienced general could have allowed himself to be drawn away from his position. But the deed was done, and in such instances the Emperor never lost time in useless recriminations. "Come," said he, addressing the Duke of Bassano, "you have just heard — that means war from early in the morning until late in the evening."

After giving various orders to the army and his chiefs, the Emperor left Dresden on the evening of the 3d of September, with the intention of regaining what he had lost from the audacious imprudence of General Vandamme. But this defeat, the first we had sustained since the resumption of hostilities, became the forerunner of the long series of reverses which awaited us. It might have been said that victory, having made one last effort in our favor at Dresden, had finally grown weary; for the remainder of the campaign was but a succession of disasters, aggravated by treachery of every description, and ending in the horrible catastrophe at Leipzig. Before leaving Dresden we had learned of the desertion to the enemy of a Westphalian regiment, with arms and baggage.

The Emperor left Marshal Saint-Cyr in Dresden with thirty thousand men, with orders to hold it to the last extremity, since the Emperor wished to preserve this capital at any price. The month of September was spent in marches and countermarches around this city, with no events of decided importance. Alas! the Emperor was never again to see the garrison of Dresden. Circumstances becoming still more embarrassed, imperiously demanded that his Majesty should promptly oppose some obstacle to the progress of the allies. The King of Saxony, furnishing an example of fidelity rare among kings, determined to

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accompany the Emperor, and entered his carriage in company with the queen and the Princess Augusta, having the headquarters' staff as escort. Two days after his departure the Saxon troops joined the French army at Eilenburg, on the banks of the Mulda. The Emperor exhorted these allies, whom he believed faithful, to maintain the independence of their country, pointed out to them how Prussia was threatening Saxony, and endeavoring to acquire her most beautiful provinces, and reminded them of the proclamation of their sovereign, his worthy and faithful ally; finally he spoke to them in the name of military honor, urging them, in closing, to take it always as their guide, and to show themselves worthy rivals of the soldiers of the grand army with whom they had made common cause, and beside whom they were now about to fight. The words of the Emperor were translated and repeated to the Saxons by the Duke of Vicenza; and this language from the lips of one whom they regarded as the friend of their sovereign and the saviour of their capital seemed to produce a profound impression. The march was then begun in confidence, with no premonition of the approaching defection of these very men who had so often greeted the Emperor with their cries of enthusiasm, swearing to fight to the death rather than abandon him.

His Majesty's plan then was to fall on Blücher and the Prince Royal of Sweden, from whom the French army was separated only by a river. We therefore left Eilenburg, where the Emperor parted with the King of Saxony and his family, the Duke of Bassano, the grand park of artillery, and all the conveyances, and directed our course towards Düben. Blücher and Bernadotte had retired, leav-

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ing Berlin uncovered. Then the Emperor's plans became known; and it was seen that he was marching on Berlin, and not on Leipzig, and that Düben was only the meeting-place for the various corps, who, when united, were to march on the capital of Prussia, which the Emperor had already seized twice.

The time was unfortunately past when a simple indication of the Emperor's plans was regarded as a signal of victory. The chiefs of the army, who had until now been perfectly submissive, began to reflect, and even took the liberty of disapproving of plans which they were afraid to execute. When the army became aware of the Emperor's intention to march on Berlin, it was the signal for almost unanimous discontent. The generals who had escaped the disasters of Moscow, and the dangers of the double campaign in Germany, were fatigued, and perhaps eager to reap the benefits of their good fortune, and at last to enjoy repose in the bosom of their families. A few went so far as to accuse the Emperor of being anxious to still extend the war. "Have there not been enough killed?" said they. "Must we all share the same fate?" And these complaints were not kept for secret confidences, but were uttered publicly, and often even loud enough to reach the ears of the Emperor; but in that case his Majesty seemed not to hear.

Amidst this disaffection of a large number of the chiefs of the army, the defection of Bavaria was learned, and gave an added strength to the anxiety and discontent inspired by the Emperor's resolution; and then occurred what had never taken place before: his staff united their entreaties that he should abandon his plans in regard to Berlin, and

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march on Leipzig. I saw how much the Emperor suffered from the necessity of listening to such remonstrances, notwithstanding the respectful language in which they were couched. For two entire days his Majesty remained undecided; and how long these forty-eight hours were! Never did abandoned cabin or bivouac present a more mournful sight than the sad château of Düben. In this doleful residence I saw the Emperor for the first time entirely unemployed; the indecision to which he was a prey absorbed him so entirely that his character seemed entirely changed. Who could believe it? To the activity which drove him on, and, so to speak, incessantly devoured him, had succeeded a seeming indifference whic his perfectly indescribable. I saw him lie on the sofa nearly a whole day, the table before him covered with maps and papers at which he did not even glance, and with no other occupation for hours than slowly tracing large letters on sheets of white paper. This was while he was vacillating between his own will and the entreaties of his generals. At the end of two days of most painful suspense he yielded; and from that time all was lost. How much better it would have been had he not listened to their complaints, but had again allowed himself to be guided by the presentiments which possessed him! He repeated often, with grief, while recalling the concessions he made at that time, "I should have avoided many disasters by continuing to follow my own impulses; I failed only by yielding to those of others."

The order for departure was given; and as if the army felt as much pride in triumphing over the will of its Emperor as they would have felt in beating the enemy by obeying the dictates of his genius, they abandoned them-

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selves to outbursts of joy which were almost beyond reason. Every countenance was radiant. "We shall now," they repeated on all sides, "we shall now see France again, embrace our children, our parents, and our friends! The Emperor and Marshal Augereau alone did not share the general light-heartedness. The Duke of Castiglione had just arrived at headquarters, after having in some measure avenged on the army of Bohemia, Vandamme's defeat. He, like the Emperor, had dark presentiments as to the consequences of this retrograde movement, and knew that desertions on the way would add to the number of the enemy, and were so much the more dangerous since these deserters had so recently been our allies and knew our positions. His Majesty yielded with a full conviction of the evil which would result; and I heard him at the end of a conversation with the marshal which had lasted more than an hour, utter these words, "They would have it so."

The Emperor on his march to Düben was at the head of a force which might be estimated at one hundred and twenty-five thousand men. He had taken this direction with the hope of finding Blücher again on the Mulda; but the Prussian general had recrossed the river, which contributed much to give credit to a rumor which had been circulated for some time. It was said that in a council of the allied sovereigns held recently at Prague, and at which Moreau and the Prince Royal of Sweden were present, it had been agreed that as far as possible they should avoid engaging in a battle whenever the Emperor commanded his army in person, and that operations should be directed only against smaller bodies commanded by his lieutenants. It is impossible, certainly, to render more striking homage

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to the superiority of the Emperor's genius; but it was at the same time stopping him in his glorious career, and paralyzing his usually all-powerful action.

However that may be, the evil genius of France having obtained the ascendency over the good genius of the Emperor, we took the road to Leipzig, and reached it early on the morning of the 15th of October. At that very moment the King of Naples was in the midst of an engagement with the Prince von Schwarzenberg; and his Majesty, on hearing the sound of cannon, crossed the town, and visited the plain where the engagement was taking place. On his return he received the royal family of Saxony, who had come to join him. During his short stay at Leipzig, the Emperor performed an act of clemency which must undoubtedly be considered most meritorious if we take into consideration the gravity of the circumstances in which we were placed. A merchant of this city named Moldrecht was accused and convicted of having distributed among the inhabitants, and even in the army, several thousand copies of a proclamation in which the Prince Royal of Sweden invited the Saxons to desert the cause of the Emperor. When arraigned before a tribunal of war, M. Moldrecht could not exculpate himself; and, indeed, this was an impossibility, since several packages of the fatal proclamation had been found at his residence. He was condemned to death, and his family in deep distress threw themselves at the feet of the King of Saxony; but, the facts being so evident and of such a nature that no excuse was possible, the faithful king did not dare to grant indulgence for a crime committed even more against his ally than against himself. Only one recourse remained for this unhappy family, which was to address the

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Emperor; but as it was difficult to reach him, M. Leborgne D'Ideville, interpreting secretary, was kind enough to undertake to place a note on the Emperor's desk, who after reading it ordered a postponement which was equivalent to a full pardon. Events followed in their course, and the life of M. Moldrecht was saved.

Leipzig, at this period, was the center of a circle in which engagements took place at numerous points and almost incessantly. Engagements lasted during the days of the 16th, 17th, and 18th; and his Majesty, as a poor return for his clemency towards M. Moldrecht, reaped the bitter fruits of the proclamation which had been scattered in every direction through the efforts of this merchant. On that day the Saxon army deserted our cause, and reported to Bernadotte. This left the Emperor a force of only one hundred and ten thousand men, with an opposing force of three hundred and thirty thousand; so that if when hostilities were resumed we were only as one to two, we were now only one to three. The day of the 18th was, as is well known, the fatal day. In the evening the Emperor, seated on a folding stool of red morocco in the midst of the bivouac fires, was dictating to the Prince of Neuchâtel his orders for the night, when two commanders of artillery were presented to his Majesty, and gave him an account of the exhausted condition of the ammunition chests. In five days we had discharged more than two hundred thousand cannon-balls, and the ammunition being consequently exhausted there was barely enough left to maintain the fire for two hours longer; and as the nearest supplies were at Madgeburg and Erfurt, whence it would be impossible to obtain help in time, retreat was rendered absolutely necessary.

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Orders were therefore given for a retreat, which began next day, the 19th, at the end of a battle in which three hundred thousand men had engaged in mortal combat, in a confined space not more than seven or eight leagues in circumference. Before leaving Leipzig, the Emperor gave to Prince Poniatowski,[1] who had just earned the baton of a marshal of France, the defense of one of the faubourgs. "You will defend the faubourg on the south," said his Majesty to him. "Sire," replied the prince, "I have very few men."—"You will defend it with those you have."—"Ah, Sire, we will remain; we are all ready to die for your Majesty." The Emperor, moved by these words, held out his arms to the prince, who threw himself into them with tears in his eyes. It was really a farewell scene, for this interview of the prince with the Emperor was their last; and soon the nephew of the last king of Poland found, as we shall soon see, a death equally as glorious as deplorable under the waves of the Elster.

At nine o'clock in the morning the Emperor took leave of the royal family of Saxony. The interview was short, but distressing and most affectionate on the part of each. The king manifested the most profound indignation at the conduct of his troops. "I could never have imagined it," said he; "I thought better of my Saxons; they are only cowards;" and his grief was so intense that the Emperor,

[1] Prince Joseph Anthony Poniatowski, born at Warsaw, 1762. Nephew of Stanislas Augustus, the last king of Poland. He commanded the Polish army against Russia, 1792, and served under Kosciuszko, 1794. He led an army of Poles under Napoleon, 1807 and 1809, and commanded a corps in the Russian campaign. Had Napoleon succeeded in that campaign, Poniatowski would have been made king of Poland. Wounded, and made a marshal at Liepzig, he was drowned on the retreat.—TRANS.

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notwithstanding the immense disadvantage which had accrued to him from the desertion of the Saxons during the battle, sought to console this excellent prince.

As his Majesty urged him to quit Leipzig in order that he might not be exposed to the dangers attending the capitulation which had now become absolutely necessary, this venerable prince replied, "No; you have already done enough, and it is carrying generosity too far to risk your person by remaining a few minutes longer in order to console us." Whilst the King of Saxony was expressing himself thus, the sound of heavy firing of musketry was heard, and the queen and Princess Augusta joined their entreaties to those of the monarch, in their excessive fright already seeing the Emperor taken and slain by the Prussians. Some officers entered, and announced that the Prince Royal of Sweden had already forced the entrance of one of the faubourgs; that General Beningsen, General Blücher, and the Prince von Swarzenberg were entering the city on every side; and that our troops were reduced to the necessity of defending themselves from house to house, and the Emperor was himself exposed to imminent peril. As there was not a moment to lose, he consented at last to withdraw; and the King of Saxony escorted him as far as the foot of the palace staircase, where they embraced each other for the last time.

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## CHAPTER XVI.

A suggestion to burn the city rejected by the Emperor. — His desire to save Leipzig. — The King of Saxony released from his oath of fidelity. — The exit from Leipzig closed to the Emperor. — His Majesty recrosses the city. — Noble behavior of the Duke of Ragusa and Marshal Ney. — Horrible scene on the streets of Leipzig. — The bridge at the mill of Lindenau. — Vivid recollections. — Orders given by the Emperor in person. — His Majesty sleeping amidst the noise of combat. — The King of Naples and Marshal Augereau at the Imperial bivouac. — The bridge cleared. — The Emperor's orders badly executed and his consequent indignation. — Absurdity of certain false rumors. — Unparalleled misfortunes. — Marshal Macdonald crosses the Elster by swimming. — Death of General Dumortier and a large number of brave soldiers. — Death of Prince Poniatowski. — Deep grief of the Emperor and universal regrets. — Particulars of this catastrophe. — The body of the prince recovered by a shepherd. — Two days at Erfurt. — The adieux of the King of Naples and the Emperor. — The King of Saxony treated as a prisoner, and the Emperor's indignation. — A brilliant affair at Hanau. — Arrival at Mayence. — Trophies of the campaign, and the Emperor's letter to the Empress. — Contrast presented by the two returns of the Emperor to France. — Arrival at Saint-Cloud. — Questions addressed to me by the Emperor, and truthful replies. — Hopes of a peace. — M. de. Saint-Aignan is captured. — The negotiator of peace taken by force. — Vain hopes. — The happiness of mediocrity.

It was exceedingly difficult to find an exit from Leipzig, as this town was surrounded on every side by the enemy. It had been proposed to the Emperor to burn the faubourgs which the heads of the columns of the allied armies had reached, in order to make his retreat more sure; but he indignantly rejected this proposal, being unwilling to leave as a last adieu to the King of Saxony his cities abandoned to the flames. After releasing him from

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his oath of fidelity, and exhorting him to now consider only his own interests, the Emperor left him, and directed his course to the gate of Ramstadt; but he found it so encumbered that it was an impossibility to clear a passage, and he was compelled to retrace his steps, again cross the city, and leave it through the northern gate, thus regaining the only point from which he could, as he intended, march on Erfurt; that is, from the boulevards on the west. The enemy were not yet completely masters of the town, and it was the general opinion that it could have been defended much longer if the Emperor had not feared to expose it to the horrors of a siege. The Duke of Ragusa continued to offer strong resistance in the faubourg of Halle to the repeated attacks of General Blücher; while Marshal Ney calmly saw the combined forces of General Woronzow,[1] the Prussian corps under the orders of General Bülow,[2] and the Swedish army, break themselves to pieces against his impregnable defenses.

So much valor was nevertheless at last compelled to yield to numbers, and above all to treachery; for at the height of the combat before the gates of Leipzig, a battalion from Baden, which until then had fought valiantly in the French ranks, suddenly abandoned the gate Saint-Peter, which it was commissioned to defend, and at the entrance to the city gave itself up to the enemy. Thereupon, accord-

[1] Prince Mikhail Woronzow, Russian statesman and general, born at Moscow, 1782; educated in England, where his father was ambassador; served against the Turks, and against Napoleon 1812–1815; in 1844 Governor of the Caucasus; died 1856. — TRANS.

[2] Count Friedrich Wilhelm von Bülow, born in Mecklenburg, 1755. It was Bülow's division of Blücher's corps which arrived first of the Prussian army at Waterloo. — TRANS.

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ing to what I have heard related by several officers who were in this terrible tumult, the streets of Leipzig presented a most horrible sight; and our soldiers, now compelled to retire, could do so only by disputing every step of the ground. An irreparable misfortune soon filled the Emperor's soul with despair.

I shall now relate the events which signalized this deplorable day just as my memory recalls them. I do not know to what cause to attribute it, but none of the many stirring events which I witnessed present themselves more distinctly before my mind than a scene which took place under the walls of Leipzig. Having triumphed over incredible obstacles, we at last succeeded in crossing the Elster on the bridge at the mill of Lindenau. I can still see the Emperor as he stationed officers along the road charged to indicate to stragglers where they might rejoin their respective commands. On this day, after the immense loss sustained owing to a disparity of numbers, he showed the same solicitude concerning everything as after a decisive triumph. But he was so overcome by fatigue that a few moments of sleep became absolutely necessary, and he slept profoundly under the noise of the cannon which thundered around him on all sides. Suddenly a terrible explosion occurred, and a few moments after the King of Naples entered his Majesty's barrack accompanied by Marshal Augereau. They brought sad news — the great bridge over the Elster had just been blown up. This was the last point of communication with the rear guard, which consisted of twenty thousand men now left on the other side of the river under the command of Marshal Macdonald. "This, then, is how my orders are executed!" exclaimed

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the Emperor, clasping his head between his hands. He remained a moment buried in thought and absorbed in his own reflections.

The fact was, his Majesty had given orders to undermine all the bridges over the Elster and have them blown up, but not until after the French army had crossed the river in safety. I have since heard this event discussed from many points of view, and have read many contradictory accounts. It is not my province to shed light on a point of history which forms such a subject of controversy, and I have consequently limited myself to relating as I have done only what came within my own knowledge. Nevertheless, I may be permitted to make to my readers one simple observation which presents itself to my mind whenever I read or hear it said that the Emperor himself had the bridge blown up in order to shelter himself from the enemy's pursuit. I ask pardon for such an expression, but this supposition appeared to me an absurdity so incredible as to surpass belief; for it is very evident that if under these disastrous circumstances he could think only of his own personal safety, he would not a short time before have voluntarily prolonged his stay in the palace of the King of Saxony, where he was exposed to much more imminent danger than he could have encountered after leaving Leipzig. Moreover, the Emperor was far from enjoying the consternation which struck him when he learned that twenty thousand of his brave soldiers were separated from him perhaps forever.

How many misfortunes were the inevitable results of the destruction of the last bridge on the road from Leipzig to Lindenau! And how many deeds of heroism, the

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greater part of which will remain forever unknown, mark this disaster! Marshal Macdonald, seeing himself separated from the army, plunged on horseback into the Elster, and was fortunate enough to reach the other bank; but General Dumortier, attempting to follow his intrepid chief, disappeared and perished in the waves with a great number of officers and soldiers; for all had sworn not to surrender themselves to the enemy, and it was only a small number who submitted to the cruel necessity of being made prisoners. The death of Prince Poniatowski caused intense sorrow in the heart of the Emperor; and it may be said that every one at headquarters was deeply distressed at the loss of our Polish hero, and all were eager to learn the particulars of so grievous and irreparable a misfortune. As was well known, his Majesty had given him orders to cover the retreat of the army, and all felt that the Emperor could not have bestowed this trust more worthily. It is related that seeing himself pressed by the enemy against the bank of the river, with no means of crossing, he was heard to say to those around him, "Gentlemen, here we must die with honor!" It is added that putting into practice this heroic resolution he swam across the waters of the Pleisse in spite of the wounds he had received in the stubborn combat he had sustained since morning. Then finding no longer any refuge from inevitable captivity, except in the waters of the Elster, the brave prince had thrown himself into it without considering the impassable steepness of the opposite bank, and in a few moments he with his horse was ingulfed beneath the waves. His body was not found until five days afterwards, and then drawn from the water by a fisherman. Such was the end, both deplorable and

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glorious, of one of the most brilliant and chivalrous of officers, who showed himself worthy to rank among the foremost French generals. Meanwhile the lack of ammunition compelled the Emperor to retire promptly, although in remarkably good order, to Erfurt, a town well furnished with both provisions and forage, as well as material for arming and equipping the army, — in fact with all the materials of war. His Majesty arrived on the 23d, having engagements each day, in order to protect his retreat against forces four or five times as numerous as those remaining at his disposal. At Erfurt the Emperor remained only two days, and left on the 25th after bidding adieu to his brother-in-law the King of Naples, whom he was never to see again. I witnessed a part of this last interview, and remarked a certain constraint in the manner of the King of Naples, which, however, his Majesty seemed not to perceive. It is true that the king did not announce his immediate departure, and his Majesty was ignorant that this prince had secretly received an Austrian general.[1] His Majesty was not informed of this until afterwards, and manifested little surprise. Moreover (I call attention to this because I so often had occasion to remark it), so many severe blows repeated in such quick succession had struck the Emperor for some time past, that he seemed to have become almost insensible, and it might well have been said that he felt himself perfectly intrenched in his ideas of fatality. Nevertheless, his Majesty, though unmoved under his own misfortunes, gave full vent to his indignation on

[1] This was Count Mier, charged to guarantee to Murat the possession of his kingdom if he abandoned the cause of the Emperor. He abandoned him. What did he gain? — NOTE BY THE EDITOR.

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learning that the allied sovereigns considered the King of Saxony as their prisoner, and had declared him a traitor, simply because he was the only one who had not betrayed him. Certainly if fortune had again become favorable to him, as in the past, the King of Saxony would have found himself master of one of the most extensive kingdoms of Europe; but fortune was hereafter to be always adverse, and even our victories brought us only a barren glory.

Thus, for instance, the French army soon covered itself with glory at Hanau, through which it was necessary to pass by overwhelming the immense army of Austrians and Bavarians collected at this point under the command of General Wrede.[1] Six thousand prisoners were the result of this triumph, which at the same time opened to us the road to Mayence, which we expected to reach without other obstacles. It was on the 2d of November, after a march of fourteen days from Leipzig, that we again beheld the banks of the Rhine, and felt that we could breathe in safety.

Having devoted five days to reorganizing the army, giving his orders, and assigning to each of the marshals and chiefs of the several corps the post he was to occupy during his absence, the Emperor left Mayence on the 7th, and on the 9th slept at Saint-Cloud, to which he returned preceded by a few trophies, as both at Erfurt and Frankfort we had taken twenty banners from the Bavarians. These banners, presented to the minister of war by M. Lecouteulx *aide-de-*

[1] Prince Karl Philipp Wrede, born at Heidelberg, 1767; served in the Austrian army, 1799 and 1800. In 1805, as commander-in-chief of the Bavarian army, served under Napoleon, and again in 1809, being made a count and field-marshal at Wagram. Commanded the Bavarian cavalry in the Russian campaign. After the defection of Austria and Bavaria in 1813, he commanded the united forces of those countries, and was severely wounded at Hanau. Died 1838.—TRANS.

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*camp* to the Prince de Neuchâtel, had preceded his Majesty's arrival in Paris by two days, and had already been presented to the Empress, to whom the Emperor had done homage in the following terms: —

"MADAME, AND MY VERY DEAR WIFE, —

I send you twenty banners taken by my army at the battles of Wachau, Leipzig, and Hanau. This is an homage it gives me pleasure to render to you. I desire that you will accept it as a mark of my entire satisfaction with the manner in which you have administered the regency which I confided to you."

Under the Consulate and during the first six years of the Empire, whenever the Emperor had returned to Paris after a campaign, it was because that campaign was finished, and the news of a peace concluded in consequence of a victory had always preceded him. For a second time he returned from Mayence under different circumstances. In this case, as on the return from Smorghoni, he left the war still in progress, and returned, not for the purpose of presenting to France the fruit of his victories, but to demand new subsidies of men and money in order to repair the defeat and losses sustained by our army. Notwithstanding this difference in the result of our wars, the welcome accorded to his Majesty by the nation was still the same, apparently at least; and the addresses by the different towns of the interior were not less numerous, nor less filled with expressions of devotion; and those especially who were the prey of fears for the future showed themselves even more devoted than all others, fearing lest their fatal premonitions should be discovered. For my own part, it had never occurred to me that the Emperor could finally succumb in

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the struggle he was maintaining; for my ideas had never reached this point, and it is only in reflecting upon it since that I have been able to comprehend the dangers which threatened him at the period we had now reached. I was like a man who had passed the night on the edge of a precipice, totally unaware of the danger to which he was exposed until it was revealed by the light of day. Nevertheless, I may say that every one was weary of the war, and that all those of my friends whom I saw on the return from Mayence spoke to me of the need of peace.

Within the palace itself I heard many persons attached to the Emperor say the same thing when he was not present, though they spoke very differently in the presence of his Majesty. When he deigned to interrogate me, as he frequently did, on what I had heard people say, I reported to him the exact truth; and when in these confidential toilet conversations of the Emperor I uttered the word peace, he exclaimed again and again, "Peace! Peace! Ah! who can desire it more than I? There are some, however, who do not desire it, and the more I concede the more they demand."

An extraordinary event which took place the very day of his Majesty's arrival at Saint-Cloud, when it became known, led to the belief that the allies had conceived the idea of entering upon new negotiations. In fact, it was learned that M. de Saint-Aignan, his Majesty's minister at the ducal court of Saxony, had been taken by main force and conducted to Frankfort, where were then assembled M. de Metternich, the Prince von Schwarzenberg, and the ministers of Russia and Prussia. There overtures entirely in the interests of peace were made to him on the part of the

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allied sovereigns, after which M. de Saint-Aignan was allowed to return immediately to the Emperor to inform him of the details of his seizure and the propositions which had been made to him. These offers made by the allies, of which I was not informed, and consequently can say nothing, seemed to strike the Emperor as worthy of consideration; and there was soon a general rumor in the palace that a new Congress was to be assembled at Manheim; that the Duke of Vicenza had been appointed by his Majesty as minister plenipotentiary; and that in order to give more dignity to his mission, the portfolio of foreign affairs had been at the same time committed to him. I remember that this news revived the hopes of all, and was most favorably received; for although it was doubtless the effect of prejudice, no one could be ignorant that the general public did not see with pleasure the Duke of Bassano in the place to which the Duke of Vicenza was called to succeed him. The Duke of Bassano was said to have acted in accordance with what he believed to be the secret wishes of the Emperor, and to be averse to peace. It will be seen later, by an answer which his Majesty made to me at Fontainebleau, how groundless and without foundation were these rumors. It seemed then exceedingly probable that the enemy really intended to treat for peace; since in procuring openly by force a French negotiator, they had forestalled any credit which might accrue to the Emperor from making overtures for peace.

What above all gave great weight to the general belief in the disposition of Europe towards peace was that not simply a Continental peace was in question as at Tilsit and Schoenbrunn, but also a general peace, in which England

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was to enter as a contracting party; so that in consequence it was hoped that the gain in the permanence of such peace would offset the severity of its terms. But unfortunately this hope, which was indulged with the joy of anticipation, lasted only a short time; and it was soon learned that the propositions made to M. de Saint-Aignan were only a bait, and an old diplomatic ruse which the foreigners had made use of simply in order to gain time by deluding the Emperor with vain hopes. In fact, a month had not passed away, there had not even been time to complete the preliminary correspondence usual in such cases, when the Emperor learned of the famous declaration of Frankfort, in which, far from entering into negotiations with his Majesty, it was attempted to separate his cause from that of France. What a mass of intrigues! Let one bless with a thankful heart his mediocrity when he compares himself with men condemned to live amid this labyrinth of high impostures and honorable hypocrisies! A sad certainty was obtained that the foreigners wished a war of extermination, and renewed consternation ensued where hope had begun to reign; but the genius of his Majesty had not yet deserted him, and from this time all his efforts were directed towards the necessity of once again meeting the enemy face to face, no longer in order to conquer his provinces, but to prevent an invasion of the sacred soil of his own country.

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## CHAPTER XVII.

Recent souvenirs. — The secret societies of Germany. — The Emperor and the Freemasons. — The Emperor amused at Cambacérès. — The fanatical assassins. — Promenade on the banks of the Elbe. — A Saxon magistrate. — Religious zeal of a Protestant. — Information as to the societies of Germany. — Opposition of the government to the *Tugendverein*. — Origin and reorganization of the clubs of 1813. — Black chevaliers and the black chasseurs. — The Confederation of Louise. — The Concordists. — The Baron de Nostitz and the Queen of Prussia's chain. — Germany divided among the chiefs of societies. — Madame Brede and the old elector of Hesse-Cassel. — Intrigue of the Baron de Nostitz. — Real object of the secret societies. — Their importance. — The Emperor's questions. — A history or a novel. — Reception of a Carbonari. — A French officer in the Tyrol. — His manners, habits, and character. — A hunting-party and the usual reception. — Italians and Tyrolese. — Trials of patience. — Three meetings appointed. — A night in the forest. — An apparent crime. — Evident proofs. — Trial, judgment, and condemnation. — Colonel Boizard. — Revelations refused. — The executioner and the scaffold. — Religious observance of the oath. — The Carbonari.

In speaking of the year 1813, an account of the incredible number of affiliations which took place at this time between secret societies recently formed in Italy and Germany should not be omitted. The Emperor from the time when he was only First Consul, not only did not oppose the opening of Masonic lodges, but we have every reason to believe secretly favored them. He was very sure that nothing originated in these meetings which could be dangerous to his person or injurious to his government; since Freemasonry counted among its votaries, and even had as chiefs, the most distinguished personages of the state. Moreover, it would have been impossible in these societies,

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where a few false brethren had slipped in, for a dangerous secret, had there been one, to escape the vigilance of the police. The Emperor spoke of it sometimes as pure child's play, suitable to amuse idlers; and I can affirm that he laughed heartily when told that the archchancellor, in his position as chief of the Grand Orient, had presided at a Masonic banquet with no less dignity than would have comported with the presidency of the senate or of the council of state. Nevertheless, the Emperor's indifference did not extend to societies known in Italy under the name of Carbonari, and in Germany under various titles. We must admit, in fact, that since the undertakings of two young Germans initiated in Illuminism, it was natural that his Majesty should not have seen without anxiety the propagation of those *bonds of virtue* in which young fanatics were transformed into assassins.

I know nothing remarkable in relation to the Carbonari, since no circumstance connected our affairs with those of Italy. In regard to the secret societies of Germany, I remember that during our stay at Dresden I heard them mentioned with much interest, and not without fears for the future, by a Saxon magistrate with whom I had the honor of associating frequently. He was a man about sixty years of age, who spoke French well, and united in the highest degree German stolidity with the gravity natural to age. In his youth he had lived in France, and part of his education had been received at the College of Sorèze; and I attributed the friendship which he showed for me to the pleasure he experienced in conversing about a country the memory of which seemed very dear to him. I remember perfectly well to-day the profound veneration with

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which this excellent man spoke to me of one of his former professors of Sorèze, whom he called Don Ferlus; and I must have had a defective memory indeed had I forgotten a name which I heard repeated so often.

My Saxon friend was named M. Gentz, but was no relation of the diplomat of the same name attached to the Austrian chancellery. He was of the Reformed religion, very faithful in the performance of his religious duties; and I can assert that I never knew a man with more simple tastes, or who was more observant of his duties as a man and a magistrate. I would not like to risk saying what were his inmost thoughts concerning the Emperor; for he rarely spoke of him, and if he had anything unpleasant to say it may be readily understood that he would not have chosen me as his confidant. One day when we were together examining the fortifications which his Majesty had erected at many points on the left bank of the Elbe, the conversation for some reason happened to fall on the secret societies of Germany, a subject with which I was perfectly unacquainted. As I was questioning him in order to obtain information, M. Gentz said to me, "It must not be believed that the secret societies which are multiplying in Germany in such an extraordinary manner have been protected by the sovereigns; for the Prussian government sees them grow with terror, although it now seeks to use them in order to give a national appearance to the war it has waged against you. Societies which are to-day tolerated have been, even in Prussia, the object of bitter persecutions. It has not been long, for instance, since the Prussian government used severe measures to suppress the society called *Tugendverein*, taking the precaution, nevertheless, to dis-

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guise it under a different title. Doctor Jahn put himself at the head of the Black Chevaliers, who were the precursors of a body of partisans known under the name of the Black Chasseurs, and commanded by Colonel Lutzow.[1] In Prussia the still vivid memory of the late queen exercised a great influence over the new direction given to its institutions, in which she occupied the place of an occult divinity. During her lifetime she gave to Baron Nostitz a silver chain, which as her gift became the decoration, or we might rather say the rallying signal, of a new society, to which was given the name of the *Confederation of Louise*. And lastly, M. Lang declared himself the chief of an order of Concordists, which he instituted in imitation of the associations of that name which had for some time existed in the universities.

"My duties as magistrate," added M. Gentz, "have frequently enabled me to obtain exact information concerning these new institutions; and you may consider the information which I give you on this subject as perfectly authentic. The three chiefs whom I have just mentioned apparently direct three separate societies; but it is very certain that the three are in reality only one, since these gentlemen engage themselves to follow in every particular the vagaries of the *Tugendverein*, and are scattered throughout Germany in order that by their personal presence they may have a more direct influence. M. Jahn is more especially in control of Prussia; M. Lang of the north, and Baron de Nostitz of the south, of Germany. The latter, knowing perhaps the influence of a woman over

[1] A Prussian general born in 1782. He commanded the free corps known as the Black Chasseurs. Died at Berlin, 1834.—TRANS.

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young converts, associated with himself a beautiful actress named Madame Brede; and she has already been the means of making a very important acquisition to the Confederation of Louise, and one which might become still more so in the future if the French should meet with reverses. The former Elector of Hesse, admitted through the influence of Madame Brede, accepted almost immediately after his reception the grand chieftancy of the Confederation of Louise, and the very day of his installation placed in the hands of M. de Nostitz the sum necessary to create and equip a free corps of seven hundred men destined to enter the service of Prussia. It is true that having once obtained possession of this sum the baron did nothing towards the formation of the corps, which greatly incensed the ex-elector; but by dint of skill and diplomacy Madame Brede succeeded in reconciling them. It has been proved, in fact, that M. de Nostitz did not appropriate the funds deposited with him, but used them for other purposes than the arming of a free corps. M. de Nostitz is beyond doubt the most zealous, ardent, and capable of the three chiefs. I do not know him personally, but I know he is one of those men best calculated to obtain unbounded influence over all with whom he comes in contact. He succeeded in gaining such dominion over M. Stein, the Prussian minister, that the latter placed two of his secretaries at the disposal of Baron de Nostitz to prepare under his direction the pamphlets with which Germany is flooded; but I cannot too often repeat," continued M. Gentz, "that the hatred against the French avowed by these various societies is simply an accidental thing, a singular creation of circumstances; since

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their prime object was the overthrow of the government as it existed in Germany, and their fundamental principle the establishment of a system of absolute equality. This is so true that the question has been earnestly debated amongst the members of the *Tugendverein* of proclaiming the sovereignty of the people throughout Germany; and they have openly declared that the war should not be waged in the name of the governments, which according to their belief are only the instruments. I do not know what will be the final result of all these machinations; but it is very certain that by giving themselves an assumed importance these secret societies have given themselves a very real one. According to their version it is they alone who have decided the King of Prussia to openly declare himself against France, and they boast loudly that they will not stop there. After all, the result will probably be the same as in nearly all such cases, — if they are found useful they will be promised wonderful things in order to gain their allegiance, and will be abandoned when they no longer serve the intended purposes; for it is an entire impossibility that reasonable governments should lose sight of the real end for which they are instituted."

This is, I think, an exact summary, not of all M. Gentz said to me concerning the secret societies of Germany, but of what I recall; and I also remember that when I gave the Emperor an account of this conversation, his Majesty deigned to give most earnest attention, and even made me repeat certain parts, which, however, I do not now remember positively. As to the Carbonari, there is every reason to think that they belonged by secret ramifications

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to the German societies; but as I have already said, I have not been able to obtain exact information as to them. Nevertheless, I will endeavor to repeat here what I heard concerning the initiation of a Carbonari.

This story, which may perhaps be only imaginary, struck my attention deeply. Moreover, I give it here with much hesitation, not knowing whether some one has not already profited by it, as I was by no means the only auditor of this narration. I obtained it from a Frenchman who lived in the north of Italy at the time my conversation with M. Gentz occurred.

"A French officer, formerly attached to General Moreau, a man of enthusiastic but at the same time gloomy and melancholy character, left the service after the trial instituted against his general at Paris. He took no part in the conspiracy; but unalterably attached to republican principles, this officer, whose tastes were very simple, and who possessed an ample competence, left France when the Empire was established, and took no pains to disguise his aversion to the head of an absolute government. Finally, although of most inoffensive conduct, he was one of those designated under the name of malcontents. After traveling several years in Greece, Germany, and Italy, he settled himself in a little village in the Venetian Tyrol. There he lived a very retired life, holding little communication with his neighbors, occupied in the study of natural science, given up to meditation, and no longer occupying himself, so to speak, with public affairs. This was his position, which appeared mysterious to some persons, at the time the institution of the *ventes* of the Carbonari were making such incredible progress in most of the Italian prov-

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inces, especially in those on the borders of the Adriatic. Several notable inhabitants of the country, who were ardent Carbonari, conceived the plan of enrolling in their society this French officer, whom they knew, and being aware of his implacable resentment against the chief of the Imperial government, whom he regarded as a great man, in fact, but at the same time as the destroyer of his beloved republic. In order not to rouse the supposed susceptibilities of this officer, they organized a hunting-party to meet in the locality where he usually took his solitary rambles. This plan was adopted, and so well carried out that the intended meeting took place apparently by chance. The officer did not hesitate to engage in conversation with the hunters, some of whom he already knew; and after some desultory remarks the conversation turned on the Carbonari, those new votaries of secret liberty. The magic word liberty had not lost its power to stir to its depths the heart of this officer, and consequently produced upon him the exact effect they desired, by awaking enthusiastic memories of his youth, and a joy to which he had long been a stranger; and consequently when they proposed to add his name to the brotherhood which was now around him, no difficulty was experienced. The officer was received, the secret signs and words of recognition were given him, and he took the oath by which he engaged to be always and at every hour at the disposal of his brethren, and to perish rather than betray their secrets; and was then initiated and continued to live as in the past, but expecting every moment a summons.

The adventurous character of the inhabitants of the Venetian Tyrol afford a striking contrast to the character

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of the inhabitants of Italy; but they have in common suspicious natures, and from suspicion to revenge the descent is rapid. The French officer had hardly been admitted, than there were found among them some who condemned this action, and regarded it as dangerous; and there were some who even went so far as to say that his being a Frenchman should have been a sufficient impediment, and that, besides, at a time when the police were employing their best men to uncover all disguises, it was necessary that the firmness and constancy of the newly elected should be put to some other proof than the simple formalities they had required. The sponsors of the officer, those who had, so to speak, earnestly desired him as a brother, raised no objections, being perfectly satisfied as to the correctness of their choice.

This was the state of affairs when news of the disaster of the French army at Leipzig were received in the neighboring provinces of the Adriatic, and redoubled the zeal of the Carbonari. About three months had passed since the reception of the French officer; and having received no news from his brethren, he thought that the duties of the Carbonari must be very inconsiderable, when one day he received a mysterious letter enjoining him to be the following night in a neighboring wood, at a certain spot exactly at midnight, and to wait there until some one came to him. The officer was promptly at the rendezvous at the appointed hour, and remained until daylight, though no one appeared. He then returned to his home, thinking that this had been simply a proof of his patience. His convictions, in this respect, were somewhat changed, however, when a few days afterwards he received another letter ordering him to pre-

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sent himself in the same manner at the same spot; and he again passed the night there in vain expectation.

Nothing further had occurred, when a third and similar rendezvous was appointed, at which the French officer presented himself with the same punctuality and inexhaustible patience. He had waited several hours, when suddenly, instead of witnessing the arrival of his brethren, he heard the clash of swords; and moved by irresistible impulse, he rushed towards the spot from which the noise issued and seemed to recede as he advanced. He soon arrived at a spot where a frightful crime had just been committed, and saw a man weltering in his blood, attacked by two assassins. Quick as lightning he threw himself, sword in hand, on the two murderers; but, as they immediately disappeared in the thick woods, he was devoting his attention to their victim, when four gendarmes arrived on the scene; and the officer then found himself alone with unsheathed sword near the murdered man. The latter, who still breathed, made a last effort to speak, and expired while indicating his defender as his murderer, wherepon the gendarmes arrested him; and two of them took up the corpse, while the others fastened the arms of the officer with ropes, and escorted him to a neighboring village, one league distant, where they arrived at break of day. He was there conducted before a magistrate, questioned, and incarcerated in the prison of the place.

Imagine the situation of this officer, with no friends in that country, not daring to recommend himself to his own government, by whom his well-known opinions had rendered him suspected, accused of a horrible crime, well aware of all the proofs against him, and, above all, com-

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pletely crushed by the last words of the dying man! Like all men of firm and resolute character, he accepted the situation without complaint, saw that it was without remedy, and resigned himself to his fate. Meanwhile, a special commission had been appointed, in order to make at least a pretense of justice; but when he was led before this commission, he could only repeat what he had already said; that is to say, give an exact account of the occurrence, protest his innocence, and admit at the same time that appearances were entirely against him. What could he reply when asked wherefore, and with what motive, he had been found alone in the night, armed with a sword, in the thickest of the wood? Here his oath as Carbonari sealed his lips, and his hesitation was taken as additional proof. What could he reply to the deposition of the gendarmes who had arrested him in the very act? He was consequently unanimously condemned to death, and reconducted to his prison until the time fixed for the execution of his sentence.

A priest was first sent to him. The officer received him with the utmost respect, but refused to make confession, and was next importuned by the visit of a brotherhood of penitents. At last the executioner came to conduct him to the place of punishment; and while he was on the way, accompanied by several gendarmes and a long line of penitents, the funeral procession was interrupted by the unexpected arrival of the colonel of the gendarmerie, whom chance brought to the scene. This officer bore the name of Colonel Boizard, a man well known in all upper Italy, and the terror of all malefactors. The colonel ordered a halt, for the purpose of himself questioning the condemned, and

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made him give an account of the circumstances of the crime and the sentence. When he was alone with the officer, he said, "You see that all is against you, and nothing can save you from the death which awaits you. I can, nevertheless, save you, but only on one condition. I know that you belong to the society of the Carbonari. Give me the names of your accomplices in these terrible conspiracies and your life shall be the reward." — "Never!" — "Consider, nevertheless." — "Never, I tell you; lead me to execution."

It was then necessary to set out anew for the place of execution. The executioner was at his post; and as the officer with a firm step mounted the fatal scaffold, Colonel Boizard rushed up to him and begged him still to save his life on the conditions he had offered. "No! no! never!" Instantly the scene changed; the colonel, the executioner, the gendarmes, the priest, penitents, and spectators, all gathered round the officer, each one eager to press him to their hearts, and he was conducted in triumph to his dwelling. All that had passed was simply an initiation. The assassins in the forest and their victim, as well as the judges and the pretended Colonel Boizard, had been playing a *rôle;* and the most suspicious Carbonari now knew how far their new brother would carry the constancy of his heroism and the observance of his oath.

This is almost exactly the recital which I heard, as I have said, with the deepest interest, and which I take the liberty of repeating, though I well understand how much it will lose by being written. Can it be implicitly believed? This is what I would not undertake to decide; but I can affirm that my informant gave it as the truth, and was per-

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fectly certain that the particulars would be found in the archives of Milan, since this extraordinary initiation was at the time the subject of a circumstantial report addressed to the vice-king, whom fate had determined should nevermore see the Emperor.

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## CHAPTER XVIII.

Confusion and disturbance at Mayence. — Decrees issued from Mayence. — Convocation of the Legislative Corps. — Ingratitude of General de Wrede. — His family misfortunes. — How the Emperor employs his time, and increased activity. — The works at Paris. — Troops equipped as if by magic. — Anxiety of the Parisians. — First foretaste of the conscription. — Bad news from the army. — Evacuation of Holland, and return of the arch-treasurer. — Capitulation of Dresden. — The treaty violated, and the Emperor's indignation. — Display of anger. — I am honored with his Majesty's confidence. — Death of the Count de Narbonne. — His first destination. — How he became the Emperor's *aide-de-camp*. — Vain ambition of several princes. — Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg. — Jealousy caused by the favor shown to M. de Narbonne. — Names forgotten. — The Emperor's opinion of M. de Narbonne. — Characteristic speech. — General Bertrand grand marshal of the palace. — Marshal Suchet colonel-general of the guard. — Change in the administration of the Empire. — The right to name the president of the Legislative Corps granted to the Emperor. — M. de Molé the youngest minister of the Empire. — Particulars of the Emperor's excursions through Paris. — His Majesty recognizes me in the crowd. — The Emperor's gayety. — The Emperor shows himself oftener in public. — Their Majesties at the opera and the ballet of *Nina*. — The Emperor intensely gratified by the acclamations of the populace. — The Emperor and Empress at the Italian opera. — Extraordinary representation and Madame Grassini. — The Emperor's visit to the establishment of Saint-Denis. — The pages, and the Emperor's fine spirits. — Serious reflections.

I DIGRESSED considerably, in the preceding chapter, from my recollections of Paris subsequent to our return from Germany after the battle of Leipzig, and the Emperor's short sojourn at Mayence. I cannot even now write the name of the latter town without recalling the spectacle of tumult and confusion which it presented after the glorious battle of Hanau, where the Bavarians fought so

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bravely on this the first occasion when they presented themselves as enemies before those in whose ranks they had so recently stood. It was, if I am not mistaken, in this last engagement that the Bavarian general, Wrede, was, with his family, the immediate victims of their treachery. The general, whom the Emperor had overwhelmed with kindness, was mortally wounded, all his relatives in the Bavarian army were slain, and his son-in-law, Prince of Oettingen, met the same fate. It was one of those events which never failed to make a deep impression on the mind of his Majesty, since it strengthened his ideas of fatality. It was also at Mayence that the Emperor gave orders for the assembling of the Corps Législatif on the 2d of December. The opening was delayed, as we shall see; and far better would it have been had it been indefinitely postponed; since in that case his Majesty would not have experienced the misfortunes he afterwards endured from their opposition, symptoms of which now manifested themselves for the first time in a manner which was, to say the least, intemperate.

One of the things which astonished me most at the time, and which still astonishes me when I recall it now, was the incredible activity of the Emperor, which, far from diminishing, seemed to increase each day, as if the very exercise of his strength redoubled it. At the period of which I now speak, it is impossible to describe how completely every moment of his Majesty's time was filled. Since he had again met the Empress and his son, the Emperor had resumed his accustomed serenity; and I rarely surprised him in that open abandonment to dejection to which he sometimes gave way, in the retirement of his

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chamber, immediately after our return from Moscow. He was occupied more ostensibly than usual in the numerous public works which were being prosecuted in Paris, and which formed a useful distraction to his engrossing thoughts of war and the distressing news which reached him from the army. Almost every day, troops, equipped as if by magic, were reviewed by his Majesty, and ordered immediately to the Rhine, nearly the whole course of which was threatened; and the danger, which we then scarcely thought possible, must have appeared most imminent to the inhabitants of the capital, not infatuated, like ourselves, by the kind of charm the Emperor exercised over all those who had the honor of approaching his august person. In fact, for the first time he was compelled to demand of the senate to anticipate the levy for the ensuing year, and each day also brought depressing news. The prince arch-treasurer [1] returned the following autumn, forced to quit Holland after the evacuation of this kingdom by our troops; whilst Marshal Gouvion Saint-Cyr was compelled at Dresden to sign a capitulation for himself and the thirty thousand men whom he had held in reserve at that place.

The capitulation of Marshal Saint-Cyr will never, surely, occupy an honorable place in the history of the cabinet of Vienna. It is not my province to pass judgment on these political combinations; but I cannot forget the indignation which was generally manifested at the palace when it was learned that this capitulation had been shamelessly violated

[1] Lebrun, Duke of Plaisance, formerly third consul, who had been appointed governor general of Holland after the abdication of King Louis.—TRANS.

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by those who had now become the stronger party. It was stated in this capitulation that the marshal should return to France with the troops under his command, carrying with him a part of his artillery, and that these troops should be exchanged for a like number of the allied troops; that the wounded French who remained at Dresden should be returned to France on their restoration to health; and that, finally, the marshal should begin these movements on the 16th of November. No part of this agreement was complied with. Imagine, then, the indignation of the Emperor, already so deeply afflicted by the capitulation of Dresden, when he learned that, contrary to every stipulation agreed upon, these troops had been made prisoners by the Prince von Swarzenberg. I remember one day the Prince de Neuchâtel being in his Majesty's cabinet, which I happened to enter at the moment, the Emperor remarked to him, with considerable vehemence, "You speak to me of peace. How can I believe in the good faith of those people? You see what happened at Dresden. No, I tell you, they do not wish to treat with us; they are only endeavoring to gain time, and it is our business not to lose it." The prince did not reply; or, at least, I heard no more, as I just then left the cabinet, having executed the duty which had taken me there. Moreover, I can add, as an additional proof of the confidence with which his Majesty honored me, that when I entered he never interrupted himself in what he was saying, however important it might be; and I dare to affirm that if my memory were better, these souvenirs would contain much more valuable information.

Since I have spoken of the evil tidings which over-

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whelmed the Emperor in such quick succession during the last months of the year 1813, there is one I should not omit, since it affected his Majesty so painfully. I refer to the death of Count Louis de Narbonne. Of all those who had not begun their careers under the eyes of the Emperor, M. de Narbonne was the one for whom he felt the deepest affection; and it must be admitted that it was impossible to find a man in whom genuine merit was united to more attractive manners. The Emperor regarded him as a most proper person to conduct a negotiation, and said of him one day, "Narbonne is a born ambassador." It was known in the palace why the Emperor had appointed him his *aide-de-camp* at the time he formed the household of the Empress Marie Louise. The Emperor had at first intended to appoint him chevalier of honor to the new Empress, but a skillfully concocted intrigue caused him to refuse this position; and it was in some degree to make amends for this that he received the appointment of *aide-de-camp* to his Majesty. There was not at that time a position more highly valued in all France; many foreign and even sovereign princes had solicited in vain this high mark of favor, and amongst these I can name Prince Leopold de Saxe-Coburg,[1] who married Princess Charlotte of England, and who refused to be King of Greece, after failing to obtain the position of *aide-de-camp* to the Emperor.

I would not dare to say, according to my recollection, that no one at the court was jealous on seeing M. de Nar-

[1] Later he became King of the Belgians (in 1831), and the next year married the daughter of Louis Philippe. His first wife, Princess Charlotte of England, whom he married in 1816, died the same year. Leopold was born 1790, and died 1865. — TRANS.

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bonne appointed *aide-de-camp* to the Emperor; but if there were any I have forgotten their names. However that may have been, he soon became very popular, and each day the Emperor appreciated more highly his character and services. I remember on one occasion to have heard his Majesty say —I think it was at Dresden—that he had never thoroughly known the cabinet of Vienna until *the fine nose of Narbonne*—that was the Emperor's expression—had *scented out* those old diplomats. After the pretended negotiations, of which I have spoken above, and which occupied the entire time of the armistice at Dresden, M. de Narbonne had remained in Germany, where the Emperor had committed to him the government of Torgau; and it was there he died, on the 17th of November, in consequence of a fall from his horse, in spite of all the attentions lavished on him by Baron Desgenettes. With the exception of the death of Marshal Duroc and Prince Poniatowski, I do not remember to have ever seen the Emperor show more sincere sorrow than on this occasion. Meanwhile, almost at the very moment he lost M. de Narbonne, but before he had heard of his death, the Emperor had made arrangements to fill the place near his person of the man he had loved most, not even excepting General Desaix. He had just called General Bertrand to the high position of grand marshal of the palace; and this choice was generally approved by all who had the honor of Count Bertrand's acquaintance. But what is there for me to say here of a man whose name in history will never be separated from that of the Emperor? This same period had seen the fall of the Duke of Istria, one of the four colonel-generals of the guard, and Marshal Duroc: and this same appointment included the names of

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their successors; for Marshal Suchet[1] was appointed at the same time as General Bertrand, and took the place of Marshal Bessières as colonel-general of the guard.

At the same time his Majesty made several other changes in the higher offices of the Empire. A committee of the senate having conferred on the Emperor the right to appoint, of his own choice, the president of the Corps Législatif, his Majesty bestowed this presidency on the Duke of Massa, who was replaced in his former position as grand judge by Count Molé,[2] the youngest of the Emperor's ministers. The Duke of Bassano[3] became the secretary of state, and the Duke of Vicenza[4] received the portfolio of foreign relations.

As I have said, during the autumn of 1813 his Majesty frequently visited the public works. He usually went almost unattended, and on foot, to visit those of the Tuileries and the Louvre, and afterwards mounted his horse, accompanied by one or two officers at most, and M. Fontaine, and went to examine those which were more distant. One day, — it was about the end of November, — having seized the opportunity of his Majesty's absence to take a walk through the Faubourg Saint Germain, I unexpectedly encountered his Majesty on his way to the Luxembourg,

[1] Louis Gabriel Suchet, born at Lyons, 1770. Served in the Italian campaign in 1796. Brigadier-general, 1797; general of division, 1799. Governor of Genoa, 1800, and served at Austerlitz, 1805. For his brilliant services in Spain he was created Duke of Albufera and marshal, 1811. At St. Helena, Napoleon stated he was the ablest of his generals then surviving. Suchet married the niece of the wives of Joseph Bonaparte and Bernadotte, and his widow died as recently as 1891. Suchet died 1826. — TRANS.

[2] Count Louis Mathieu Molé, born in Paris, 1781. Minister of Marine under Louis XVIII. Prime Minister under Louis Philippe. Died 1855. — TRANS.

[3] Maret.

[4] Caulaincourt. — TRANS.

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just as he arrived at the entrance of the Rue de Tournon; and it is impossible to describe the intense satisfaction with which I heard shouts of *Vive l'Empereur* break forth as he approached. I found myself driven by the crowd very near the Emperor's horse, and yet I did not imagine for a moment that he had recognized me. On his return, however, I had proofs to the contrary. His Majesty had seen me; and as I assisted him to change his clothing the Emperor gayly remarked to me, "Well, M. le Drole! Ah! ah! what were you doing in the Faubourg Saint Germain? I see just how it is! A fine thing really! You spy on me when I go out," and many other jests of the same kind; for on that day the Emperor was in such fine spirits that I concluded he had been much pleased with his visit.

Whenever at this time the Emperor experienced any unusual anxiety, I noticed that in order to dispel it he took pleasure in exhibiting himself in public more frequently, perhaps, than during his other sojourns in Paris, but always without any ostentation. He went frequently to the theater; and, thanks to the obliging kindness of Count de Rémusat, I myself frequently attended these assemblies, which at that time always had the appearance of a *fête*. Assuredly, when on the occasion of the first representation of the ballet of *Nina*, their Majesties entered their box, it would have been difficult to imagine that the Emperor had already enemies among his subjects. It is true that the mothers and widows in mourning were not there; but I can affirm that I have never seen more perfect enthusiasm. The Emperor enjoyed this from the depths of his heart, even more, perhaps, than after his victories. The conviction that he was beloved by the French people impressed him deeply,

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and in the evening he condescended to speak to me of it—shall I dare to say like a child puffed up with pride at the reward he has just received? Then in the perfect freedom of privacy he said repeatedly, "My wife! my good Louise! Truly, she should be well satisfied." The truth is, that the desire to see the Emperor at the theater was so great in Paris, that as he always took his place in the box at the side, opening on the proscenium, each time that he made his appearance there the boxes situated on the opposite side of the hall were rented at incredible figures, and even the uppermost tiers were preferred to those from which they could not see him easily. No one who lived in Paris at that time can fail to recognize the correctness of this statement.

Some time after the first representation of the ballet of *Nina*, the Emperor again attended the theater, and I was also present. As formerly, the Emperor accompanied her Majesty; and I could not keep back the thought, as the play proceeded, that the Emperor had some memories sufficient to distract his attention from the exquisite music. It was at the Italian theater then occupying the Odéon. The *Cleopatra* of Nazzolini was played; and the representation was among the number of those called *extraordinary*, since it was on the occasion of Madame Grassini's benefit. It had been only a short while since this singer, celebrated in more ways than one, had first appeared in public on a Parisian stage, I think this was really only the third or fourth time; and I should state, in order to be exactly correct, that she did not produce on the Parisian public exactly the impression which had been expected from her immense reputation. It had been long since the Emperor

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had received her privately; but, nevertheless, her voice and Crescentini's had been reserved until then for the privileged ears of the spectators of Saint-Cloud and the theater of the Tuileries. On this occasion the Emperor was very generous towards the beneficiary, but no interview resulted; for, in the language of a poet of that period, the Cleopatra of Paris did not conquer another Antony.

Thus, as we see, the Emperor on a few occasions laid aside the important affairs which occupied him, less to enjoy the theater than for the purpose of showing himself in public. All useful undertakings were the objects of his care; and he did not depend entirely even on the information of men to whom he had most worthily committed them, but saw everything for himself. Among the institutions especially protected by his Majesty, there was one in which he took an especial interest. I do not think that in any of the intervals between his wars the Emperor had come to Paris without making a visit to the institution of the Daughters of the Legion of Honor, of which Madame Campan was in charge, first at Écouen, and afterwards at Saint-Denis. The Emperor visited it in the month of November, and I remember an anecdote which I heard related to his Majesty on this occasion which diverted him exceedingly. Nevertheless, I cannot remember positively whether this anecdote relates to the visit of 1813, or one made previously.

In the first place, it must be explained that, in accordance with the regulation of the household of the young ladies of the Legion of Honor, no man, with the exception of the Emperor, was admitted into the interior of the establishment. But as the Emperor was always attended by an

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escort, his suite formed in some sort a part of himself, and entered with him. Besides his officers, the pages usually accompanied him. In the evening on his return from Saint-Denis, the Emperor said to me, laughing, as he entered his room, where I was waiting to undress him, "Well, my pages wish to resemble the pages of former times! The little idiots! Do you know what they do? When I go to Saint-Denis, they have a contest among themselves as to who shall be on duty. Ha! ha!" The Emperor, while speaking, laughed and rubbed his hands together; and then, having repeated several times in the same tone, "The little idiots," he added, following out one of those singular reflections which sometimes struck him, "I, Constant, would have made a very poor page; I would never have had such an idea. Moreover, these are good young men; good officers have already come from among them. This will lead one day to some marriages." It was very rare, in fact, that a thing, though frivolous in appearance, did not lead, on the Emperor's part, to some serious conclusion. Hereafter, indeed, with the exception of a few remembrances of the past, I shall have only serious and often very sad events to relate; for we have now arrived at the point where everything has taken a serious turn, and clothed itself in most somber tints.

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## CHAPTER XIX.

**Last celebration of the anniversary of the coronation. — The Emperor's love for France. — His Majesty more popular in misfortune. — Visits to the Faubourg Saint-Antoine. — Conversation with the residents. — General enthusiasm. — The populace escort his Majesty. — A wrong interpretation. — The iron gates of the Carrousel. — The Emperor more annoyed than pleased. — Fears of disorder and recollections of the revolution. — Volunteer enrollments and a new regiment of the guard. — Free representations at the theater. — Marriage of twelve young girls. — Residence at the Tuileries. — Émile and Montmorency. — Movements of the enemy's troops. — Desertion of the Emperor's last ally. — Armistice between Denmark and Russia. — Opinions of certain generals as to the French army in Spain. — Adhesion of the Emperor to the basis of the alliance. — Negotiations, the Duke of Vicenza and M. de Metternich. — The Duke of Massa president of the Corps Législatif. — Opening of the session. — The senate and the council of state at the Corps Législatif. — Address of the Emperor. — His Majesty asserts his desire for the re-establishment of peace. — Death of General Dupont Derval, and his two widows. — The pension I obtained from his Majesty for one of them. — His Majesty's aversion to divorce, and respect for marriage.**

For the last time we celebrated in Paris the anniversary *fête* of his Majesty's coronation. The gifts to the Emperor on this occasion were innumerable addresses made to him by all the towns of the Empire, in which offers of sacrifices and protestations of devotion seemed to increase in intensity in proportion to the difficulty of the circumstances. Alas! in four months the full value of these protestations was proved; and, nevertheless, how was it possible to believe that this enthusiasm, which was so universal, was not entirely sincere? This would have been an impossibility with the Emperor, who, until the very end of his reign, be-

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lieved himself beloved by France with the same devotion which he felt for her. A truth, which was well proved by succeeding events, is that the Emperor became more popular among that part of the inhabitants called the people when misfortunes began to overwhelm him. His Majesty had proofs of this in a visit he made to the Faubourg Saint-Antoine; and it is very certain that, if under other circumstances he had been able to bend from his dignity to propitiate the people, a means which was most repugnant to the Emperor in consequence of his remembrances of the Revolution, all the faubourgs of Paris would have armed themselves in his defense. How can this be doubted after the event which I here describe?

The Emperor, towards the end of 1813 or the beginning of 1814, on one occasion visited the Faubourg Saint-Antoine. I cannot to-day give the precise date of this unexpected visit; but at any rate he showed himself on this occasion familiar, even to the point of good fellowship, which emboldened those immediately around to address him. I now relate the conversation which occurred between his Majesty and several of the inhabitants, which has been faithfully recorded, and admitted to be true by several witnesses of this really touching scene.

*An Inhabitant.* — "Is it true, as I am told, that the condition of affairs is so bad?"

*The Emperor.* — "I cannot say that they are in a very good condition."

*The Inhabitant.* — "But how, then, will all this end?"

*The Emperor.* — "By my faith, God alone knows."

*The Inhabitant.* — "But what! Is it possible the enemy could really enter France?"

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*The Emperor.* — "That might occur, and they might even penetrate as far as this place, if you do not come to my aid. I have not a million arms. I cannot do everything alone."

*Numerous Voices.* — "We will uphold you, we will uphold you."

*Still more Voices.* — "Yes, yes. Count on us."

*The Emperor.* — "In that case the enemy will be beaten, and we will preserve our glory untarnished."

*Several Voices.* — "But what, then, shall we do?"

*The Emperor.* — "Be enrolled and fight."

*A New Voice.* — "We would do this gladly, but we would like to make certain conditions."

*The Emperor.* — "Well, speak out frankly. Let us know; what are these conditions?"

*Several Voices.* — "That we are not to pass the frontiers."

*The Emperor.* — "You shall not pass them."

*Several Voices.* — "We wish to enter the guard."

*The Emperor.* — "Well, then, you shall enter the guard."

His Majesty had hardly pronounced these last words, when the immense crowd which surrounded him made the air resound with cries of "*Vive l'Empereur!*" and their number continued to increase all the way as the Emperor slowly returned to the Tuileries, until, by the time he reached the gates of the Carrousel, he was accompanied by an innumerable *cortège*. We heard these noisy acclamations; but they were so badly interpreted by the commandant of the post at the palace, that he thought it was an insurrection, and the iron gates of the Tuileries on that side of the court were closed.

When I saw the Emperor, a few moments after his return, he appeared more annoyed than pleased; for everything having an appearance of disorder was excessively distasteful to him, and a popular tumult, whatever its cause, had always in it something unpleasant to him.

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Meanwhile this scene, which his Majesty might well have repeated, produced a deep impression on the people; and this enthusiasm had positive and immediate results, since on that day more than two thousand men were voluntarily enrolled, and formed a new regiment of the guard.

On the anniversary *fête* of the coronation and of the battle of Austerlitz, there were as usual free representations in all the theaters of Paris; but at these the Emperor did not appear, as he had so often done. There were also amusements, a free distribution of eatables, and also illuminations; and twelve young girls, whose marriage dowries were given by the city of Paris, were married to old soldiers. I remember that among everything which marked the ceremonials of the Empire, the custom of performing these marriages was the one most pleasing to the Emperor, and he often spoke of it in terms of approbation; for, if I may be allowed to make the observation, his Majesty had what might be called a kind of mania on the subject of marriage. We were now settled at the Tuileries, which the Emperor had not left since the 20th of November when he had returned from Saint-Cloud, and which he did not leave again until his departure for the army. His Majesty often presided over the deliberations of the council of state, which were of grave interest. I learned at that time, in relation to a certain decree, a circumstance which appeared to me very singular. The Commune of Montmorency had long since lost its ancient name; but it was not until the end of November, 1813, that the Emperor legally took away the name of Émile which it had received under the republic in honor of J. J. Rousseau. It may well be believed that it had

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retained it so long simply because the Emperor's attention had not been directed to it sooner.

I do not know but I should ask pardon for relating so trivial an event, when so many great measures were being adopted by his Majesty. In fact, each day necessitated new dispositions, since the enemy was making progress at every point. The Russians occupied Holland under the command of General Witzengerode, who had opposed us so bitterly during the Russian campaign; already, even, the early return to Amsterdam of the heir of the House of Orange was discussed; in Italy Prince Eugène was holding out only by dint of superior skill against the far more numerous army of Bellegarde,[1] who had just passed the Adige; that of the Prince von Swarzenberg occupied the confines of Switzerland; the Prussians and the troops of the Confederation were passing the Rhine at several points. There remained to the Emperor not a single ally, as the King of Denmark, the only one who had until now remained faithful, had succumbed to the northern torrent, and concluded an armistice with Russia; and in the south all the strategy of Marshal Soult barely sufficed to delay the progress of the Duke of Wellington, who was advancing on our frontiers at the head of an army far more numerous than that with which we could oppose him, and which, moreover, was not suffering from the same privations as our own. I remember well to have heard several generals blame the Emperor at that time, because he had not abandoned

[1] Count Henri de Bellegarde, born at Chambéry, 1755; entered the Austrian service, and was prominent in the campaigns against France, 1793–1800; field marshal, 1806; died 1831.—TRANS.

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Spain, and recalled all his troops to France. I make a note of this, but, as may well be believed, am not willing to risk my judgment on such matters. At all events, it is evident that war surrounded us on every side; and in this state of affairs, and with our ancient frontiers threatened, it would have been strange if there had not been a general cry for peace. The Emperor desired it also; and no one now holds a contrary opinion. All the works which I have read, written by those persons best situated to learn the exact truth of these events, agree on this point. It is known that his Majesty had dictated to the Duke of Bassano a letter in which he adhered to the basis of the proposal for a new congress made at Frankfort by the allies. It is also known that the city of Mannheim was designated for the session of this new congress, to which the Duke of Vicenza was to be sent. The latter, in a note of the 2d of December, made known again the adhesion of the Emperor to the original principles and summary to be submitted to the Congress of Mannheim. The Count de Metternich, on the 10th, replied to this communication that the sovereigns would inform their allies of his Majesty's adhesion. All these negotiations were prolonged only on account of the allies, who finally declared at Frankfort that they would not consent to lay down their arms. On the 20th of December they openly announced their intention to invade France by passing through Switzerland, whose neutrality had been solemnly recognized by treaty. At the period of which I speak, my position kept me, I must admit, in complete ignorance of these affairs; but, on learning them since, they have awakened in me other remembrances which have

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powerfully contributed to prove their truth. Every one, I hope, will admit that if the Emperor had really desired war, it is not before me he would have taken the trouble to express his desire for the conclusion of peace, as I heard him do several times; and this by no means falsifies what I have related of a reply given by his Majesty to the Prince of Neuchâtel, since in this reply he attributes the necessity of war to the bad faith of his enemies. Neither the immense renown of the Emperor nor his glory needs any support from me, and I am not deluding myself on this point; but I ask to be allowed like any other man to give my mite of the truth.

I have said previously, that when passing through Mayence the Emperor had convened the Corps Législatif for the 2d of December; but by a new decree it was postponed until the 19th of that month, and this annual solemnity was marked by the introduction of unaccustomed usages. In the first place, as I have said, to the Emperor alone was given the right of naming the president without the presentation of a triple list, as was done in former times by the senate; moreover, the senate and the council of state repaired in a body to the hall of the Corps Législatif to be present at the opening of the session. I also remember that this ceremony was anticipated with more than usual interest; since throughout Paris all were curious and eager to hear the address of the Emperor, and what he would say on the situation of France. Alas, we were far from supposing that this annual ceremony would be the last.

The senate and the council of state, having taken the places indicated to them in the hall, the Empress

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arrived, and entered the reserved gallery, surrounded by her ladies and the officers of her household. At last the Emperor appeared, a quarter of an hour after the Empress, and was introduced with the accustomed ceremonials. When the new president, the Duke of Massa, had taken the oath at the hands of the Emperor, his Majesty pronounced the following discourse: —

"*Senators; Councilors of State; Deputies from the Departments to the Corps Législatif:* —

Brilliant victories have made the French arms illustrious in this campaign, but unexampled defections have rendered these victories useless. Everything has turned against us. Even France would be in danger were it not for the energy and union of the French people.

Under these momentous circumstances my first thought was to summon you. My heart felt the need of the presence and affection of my subjects.

I have never been seduced by prosperity; adversity will find me above the reach of its attacks. I have many times given peace to nations, even when they had lost all. On a part of my conquests I have erected thrones for kings who have now abandoned me.

I have conceived and executed great plans for the happiness of the world. Both as a monarch and a father I feel that peace adds to the security of thrones and of families. Negotiations have been entered into with the Confederated Powers. I have adhered to the fundamental principles which they have presented. I then hoped that, before the opening of this session, the Congress of Mannheim would have assembled; but renewed delays, which cannot be attributed to France, have deferred this moment, which the whole world so eagerly desires.

I have ordered that all the original articles contained in the portfolio of Foreign Affairs should be submitted to you. You will be informed of them through a committee. The spokesmen of my Council will inform you of my wishes on this subject.

Nothing has been interposed on my part to the re-establishment

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of peace; I know and share the sentiments of the French people. I repeat, of the French people, since there are none among them who desire peace at the expense of honor. It is with regret that I demand of this generous people new sacrifices, but they are necessary for their noblest and dearest interests. I have been compelled to re-enforce my armies by numerous levies, for nations treat with security only when they display all their strength. An increase of receipts has become indispensable. The propositions which my minister of finance will submit to you are in conformity with the system of finance I have established. We will meet all demands without borrowing, which uses up the resources of the future, and without paper money, which is the greatest enemy of social order.

I am well satisfied with the sentiments manifested towards me under these circumstances by my people of Italy.

Denmark[1] and Naples alone remain faithful to their alliance. The Republic of the United States of America successfully continues its war with England. I have recognized the neutrality of the nineteen Swiss cantons.

*Senators; Councillors of State; Deputies of the Departments in the Corps Législatif:* —

You are the natural organs of the throne. It is your province to display an energy which will hold our country up to the admiration of all future generations. Let it not be said of us: '*They sacrificed the first interests of their country; they submitted to the control which England has sought in vain for four centuries to impose on France.*'

My people need not fear that the policy of their Emperor will ever betray the glory of the nation; and on my part I have the conviction that the French people will ever prove worthy of themselves and of me."

This address was received with unanimous shouts of "*Vive l'Empereur;*" and, when his Majesty returned to the Tuileries, he had an air of intense satisfaction, although he

[1] Denmark, as I have stated, had already concluded an armistice with Russia, but the news did not reach Paris till several days after this. — CONSTANT.

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had a slight headache, which disappeared after half an hour's repose. In the evening it was entirely gone, and the Emperor questioned me on what I had heard people say. I told him truthfully that the persons of my acquaintance unanimously agreed that the desire for peace was universal. "Peace, peace!" said the Emperor, "who can desire it more than I? Go, my son, go." I withdrew, and his Majesty went to the Empress.

It was about this time, I do not remember the exact day, that the Emperor gave a decision on a matter in which I had interested myself with him; and I affirm that it will be seen from this decision what a profound respect his Majesty had for the rights of a legitimate marriage, and his excessive antipathy to divorced persons. But, in order to support this assertion, I will give an anecdote which recurs to my memory at this moment.

During the Russian campaign General Dupont-Derval was slain on the battlefield, fighting valiantly. His widow, after his Majesty's return to Paris, had often, but always in vain, endeavored to present a petition to his Majesty describing her unfortunate condition. At length some one advised her to secure my services; and, touched by her unhappiness, I presented her demand to the Emperor. His Majesty but rarely refused my solicitations of this kind, as I conducted them with the utmost discretion; and consequently I was fortunate enough to obtain for Madame Dupont-Derval a very considerable pension. I do not remember how the Emperor discovered that General Dupont-Derval had been divorced, and had left a daughter by a former marriage, who, as well as her mother, was still living. He learned besides that General Dupont-Derval's

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second wife was the widow of a general officer by whom she had two daughters. None of these circumstances, as may be imagined, had been cited in the petition; but, when they came to the Emperor's knowledge, he did not withdraw the pension, for which the order had not yet been given, but simply changed its destination, and gave it to the first wife of General Dupont-Derval, making it revertible to her daughter, though she was sufficiently wealthy not to need it, and the other Madame Dupont-Derval was in actual need. Meanwhile, as one is always pleased to be the bearer of good tidings, I had lost no time in informing my petitioner of the Emperor's favorable decision. When she learned what had taken place, of which I was still in entire ignorance, she returned to me, and from what she said I imagined she was the victim of some mistake. In this belief I took the liberty of again speaking to his Majesty on the subject, and my astonishment may be imagined when his Majesty himself condescended to relate to me the whole affair. Then he added: "My poor child, you have allowed yourself to be taken for a simpleton. I promised a pension, and I gave it to the wife of General Derval, that is to say, to his real wife, the mother of his daughter." The Emperor was not at all angry with me. I know very well that the matter would not have been permitted to continue thus without my interesting myself further in it; but events followed each other in rapid succession until the abdication of his Majesty, and the affair finally remained as thus settled.

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## CHAPTER XX.

Efforts of the allies to separate France from the Emperor. — Truth of his Majesty's words proved by events. — Copies of the declaration of Frankfort circulating in Paris. — The declaration compared with the Emperor's speech. — The insincerity of the foreigners admitted by M. de Bourrienne. — Reflections on a passage in his *Memoirs*. — M. de Bourrienne under guard. — The Duke of Rovigo his defender. — The enemy's object partly attained. — Count Regnault de Saint Jean d'Angely at the Corps Législatif. — Committee from the Corps Législatif. — The Emperor's remark and the five lawyers. — The Emperor's letter to the Duke of Massa. — Meeting of the two commissions at the residence of the prince archchancellor. — Reserve shown by the senate. — Frequent visits of the Duke of Rovigo to the Emperor. — This minister tells his Majesty the truth. — Fear of increasing the number of persons compromised. — Authentic and unknown anecdote. — An employee of the treasury enthusiastic for the Emperor. — Forced visit to the minister of general police. — The minister and the employee. — Dialogue. — The enthusiast threatened with imprisonment. — Sagacious explanations of the minister. — Work of the two commissions. — The address to the senate well received. — His Majesty's remarkable reply. — Promise more difficult to make than to keep. — Increase of taxes. — Wise judgment in regard to the conduct of the Corps Législatif. — The report of the commission. — Vehement interruption and reply. — The Emperor much disturbed, and promenading with great strides. — Decision taken and condemned. — Impressed with the report and the address. — The hall where the sittings are held is violently closed. — The deputies at the Tuileries. — A strong expression of dissatisfaction with the Emperor. — Incendiary address. — Correspondence with England and the lawyer Desèze. — The archchancellor protects M. Desèze. — The Emperor's calm. — Bad effects. — Sad premonitions, and the close of the year 1813.

It was not only by force of arms that the enemies of France endeavored at the end of 1813 to overthrow the power of the Emperor. In spite of our defeats the Emperor's name still inspired a salutary terror; and it was

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apparent that although so numerous, the foreigners still despaired of victory as long as there existed a common accord between the Emperor and the French people. We have seen in the preceding chapter in what language he expressed himself to the great united bodies of the state, and events have proved whether his Majesty concealed the truth from the representatives of the nation as to the real condition of France. To this discourse which history has recorded, I may be allowed to oppose here another made at the same period. This is the famous declaration of Frankfort, copies of which the enemies of the Emperor caused to be circulated in Paris; and I would not dare to wager that persons of his court, while performing their duties near him, did not have a copy in their pockets. If there still remains any doubt as to which party was acting in good faith, the reading of what follows is sufficient to dispel these; for there is no question here of political considerations, but simply the comparison of solemn promises with the actions which succeeded.

"The French government has just ordered a new levy of three hundred thousand men; the proclamations of the senate contain a challenge to the allied powers. They find themselves called on again to promulgate to the world the views by which they are guided in this present war, the principles which form the basis of their conduct, their wishes, and their intentions. The allied powers are not making war on France, but on the openly admitted preponderance which, to the great misfortune of Europe and France, the Emperor Napoléon has too long maintained outside the limits of his Empire.

Victory has brought the allied armies to the Rhine. The first use their imperial and royal Majesties have made of victory has been to offer peace to his Majesty the Emperor of the French. A position re-enforced by the accession of all the sovereigns and princes of Ger-

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many has had no influence on the conditions of this peace, for these conditions are founded on the independence of the other states of Europe. The objects of these powers are just in their aims, generous and liberal in their application, reassuring to all, and honorable to each.

The allied sovereigns desire that France should be great, strong, and happy, since its greatness and power is one of the foundations of the social edifice. They desire that France should be happy, that French commerce should revive, that the arts, those blessings of peace, should flourish, because a great people are tranquil only when satisfied. The powers confirm the French Empire in the possession of an extent of territory which France has never attained under her kings, since a generous nation should not be punished because it has experienced reverses in a bloody and well-contested struggle in which it has fought with its accustomed bravery.

But the powers themselves also wish to be happy and peaceful. They desire a condition of peace which, by a wise partition of force, by a just equilibrium, may hereafter preserve their people from the innumerable calamities which have for twenty years overwhelmed Europe.

The allied powers will not lay down their arms until they have obtained this grand and beneficent result, the worthy object of all their efforts. They will not lay down their arms until the political condition of Europe is again secure; until immutable principles have regained their ascendency over new pretensions, and the sanctity of treaties has finally assured a genuine peace to Europe."

It needs only common sense to ascertain whether the allied powers were sincere in this declaration, the object of which evidently was to alienate from the Emperor the affections of his people by holding up his Majesty before them as an obstacle to peace, and separating his cause from that of France; and on this point I am glad to support my own opinion by that of M. de Bourrienne, whom surely no one will accuse of partiality for his Majesty.

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From a Painting by Hte. Bellange

NAPOLEON ON THE HEIGHTS AT LIGNY

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Several passages of his *Memoirs*, above all those in which he blames the Emperor, have pained me, I must confess; but on this occasion he does not hesitate to admit the insincerity of the allies, which opinion is of much weight according to my poor judgment.

M. de Bourrienne was then at Paris under the special surveillance of the Duke of Rovigo. I frequently heard this minister mention him to the Emperor, and always favorably; but the enemies of the former secretary of the First Consul must have been very powerful, or his Majesty's prejudices very strong, for M. de Bourrienne never returned to favor. The Emperor, who, as I have said, sometimes condescended to converse familiarly with me, never spoke to me of M. de Bourrienne, whom I had not seen since the Emperor had ceased to receive him. I saw him again for the first time among the officers of the National Guard, the day these gentlemen were received at the palace, as we shall see later, and I have never seen him since; but as we were all much attached to him on account of his kind consideration for us, he was often the subject of conversation, and, I may add, of our regrets. Moreover, I was long ignorant that at the period of which I am now speaking, his Majesty had offered him the mission to Switzerland, as I learned this circumstance only from reading his *Memoirs*. I would not conceal, however, that I was painfully affected by reading this, so greatly would I have desired that Bourrienne should overcome his resentment against his Majesty, who in the depths of his heart really loved him.

Whatever was done, it is evident now to all that the object of the declaration of Frankfort was to cause aliena-

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tion between the Emperor and the French people, and subsequent events have shown that this was fully understood by the Emperor, but unfortunately it was soon seen that the enemy had partly obtained their object. Not only in private society persons could be heard expressing themselves freely in condemnation of the Emperor, but dissensions openly arose even in the body of the Corps Législatif.

After the opening session, the Emperor having rendered a decree that a commission should be named composed of five senators and five members of the Corps Législatif, these two bodies consequently assembled. This commission, as has been seen from his Majesty's address, had for its object the consideration of articles submitted relative to pending negotiations between France and the allied powers. Count Regnault de Saint Jean d'Angely bore the decree to the Corps Législatif, and supported it with his usual persuasive eloquence, recalling the victories of France and the glory of the Emperor; but the ballot elected as members of the commission five deputies who had the reputation of being more devoted to the principles of liberty than to the Emperor. These were M. Raynouard, Lainé, Gallois, Flaugergues, and Maine de Biran. The Emperor from the first moment appeared much dissatisfied with this selection, not imagining, however, that this commission would soon show itself so entirely hostile. I remember well that I heard his Majesty say in my presence to the Prince of Neuchâtel, with some exasperation though without anger, "They have appointed five lawyers."

Nevertheless, the Emperor did not allow the least symptoms of his dissatisfaction to be seen; and as soon as he had officially received the list of commissioners, addressed

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to the President of the Corps Législatif the following letter bearing the date of the 23d of December: —

"MONSIEUR, *Duke of Massa, President of the Legislative Corps.* —

We address you the inclosed letter to make known to you our intention that you report to-morrow, the 24th instant, at the residence of our cousin the prince archchancellor of the Empire, in company with the commission appointed yesterday by the Legislative Corps in compliance with our decree of the 20th instant, and which is composed of the following gentlemen: Raynouard, Lainé, Gallois, Flaugergues, and Maine de Biran, for the purpose of considering the articles relative to the negotiations, and also the declaration of the confederated powers, which will be communicated by Count Regnault minister of state, and Count d'Hauterive councilor of state attached to the department of foreign relations, who will be the bearer of the aforesaid articles and declaration.

Our intention also is that our cousin aforesaid should preside over this commission. With this" etc.

The members of the senate appointed on this commission were M. de Fontanes, M. the Prince of Bénévent, M. de Saint Marsan, M. de Barbé-Marbois, and M. de Beurnonville.

With the exception of one of these gentlemen, whose disgrace and consequent opposition were publicly known, the others were thought to be sincerely attached to the Emperor; and whatever may have been their opinions and their subsequent conduct they had done nothing then to deserve the same distrust from the Emperor as the members of the committee from the Corps Législatif. No active opposition, no signs of discontent, had been shown by the conservative senate.

At this time the Duke of Rovigo came frequently, or

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I might rather say every day, to the Emperor. His Majesty was much attached to him, and that alone suffices to prove that he was not afraid to hear the truth; for since he had been minister, the Duke of Rovigo had never concealed it, which fact I can affirm, having been frequently an eye-witness. In Paris there was nevertheless only unanimous opposition to this minister. I can, however, cite one anecdote that the Duke of Rovigo has not included in his *Memoirs*, and of which I guarantee the authenticity; and it will be seen from this incident whether or not the minister of police sought to increase the number of persons who compromised themselves each day by their pratings against the Emperor.

Among the employees of the treasury was a former receiver of the finances who led a retired and contented life in this modest employment. He was a very enthusiastic man of much intelligence. His devotion to the Emperor amounted to a passion, and he never mentioned him without a sort of idolatry. This employee was accustomed to pass his evenings with a circle of friends who met in the Rue de Vivienne. The regular attendants of this place, whom the police very naturally had their eyes upon, did not all hold the same opinion as the person of whom I have just spoken, and began openly to condemn the acts of government, the opposing party allowing their discontent to be plainly manifest; and the faithful adorer of his Majesty became proportionately more lavish of his expressions of admiration, as his antagonists showed themselves ready with reproaches. The Duke of Rovigo was informed of these discussions, which each day became more eager and animated; and one fine day our honest employee found on

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returning to his home a letter bearing the seal of the general of police. He could not believe his eyes. He, a good, simple, modest man living his retired life, what could the minister of general police desire of him? He opens the letter, and finds that the minister orders him to appear before him the next morning. He reports there as may be imagined with the utmost punctuality, and then a dialogue something like this ensued between these gentlemen. "It appears, Monsieur," said the Duke of Rovigo, "that you are very devoted to the Emperor." — "Yes, I love him; I would give him my blood, my life." — "You admire him greatly?" — "Yes, I admire him! The Emperor has never been so great, his glory has never" — "That is all very well, Monsieur; your sentiments do you honor, and I share those sentiments with you; but I urge on you to reserve the expression of them for yourself, for, though I should regret it very much, you may drive me to the necessity of having you arrested." — "I, my Lord, have me arrested? Ah! but doubtless — why?" — "Do you not see that you cause the expression of opinions that might remain concealed were it not for your enthusiasm; and finally, you will force many good men to compromise themselves to a certain extent, who will return to us when things are in better condition. Go, Monsieur, let us continue to love, serve, and admire the Emperor; but at such a time as this let us not proclaim our fine sentiments so loudly, for fear of rendering many guilty who are only a little misguided." The employee of the treasury then left the minister, after thanking him for his advice and promising to follow it. I would not dare to assert that he kept his word scrupulously, but I can affirm that all I have

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just said is the exact truth; and I am sure that if this passage in my *Memoirs* falls under the eyes of the Duke of Rovigo it will remind him of an occurrence which he may perhaps have forgotten, but which he will readily recall.

Meanwhile the commission, composed as I have said of five senators and five members of the Corps Législatif, devoted itself assiduously to the duty with which it was charged. Each of these two grand bodies of the state presented to his Majesty a separate address. The senate had received the report made by M. de Fontanes; and their address contained nothing which could displease the Emperor, but was on the contrary expressed in most proper terms. In it a peace was indeed demanded, but a peace which his Majesty could obtain by an effort worthy of him and of the French people. "Let that hand so many times victorious," they said, "lay down its arms after having assured the repose of the world." The following passage was also noteworthy: "No, the enemy shall not destroy this beautiful and noble France, which for fourteen hundred years has borne itself gloriously through such diverse fortunes, and which for the interest of the neighboring nations themselves should always bear considerable weight in the balance of power in Europe. We have as pledges of this your heroic constancy and the national honor." Then again, "Fortune does not long fail nations which do not fail in their duty to themselves."

This language, worthy of true Frenchmen, and which the circumstances at least required, was well pleasing to the Emperor, as is evident from the answer he made on the 29th of December to the deputation from the senate with the prince archchancellor at its head: —

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"Senators," said his Majesty, "I am deeply sensible of the sentiments you express. You have seen by the articles which I have communicated to you what I am doing towards a peace. The sacrifices required by the preliminary basis which the enemy had proposed to me I have accepted; and I shall make them without regret, since my life has only one object, — the happiness of the French people.

"Meanwhile Bearn, Alsace, Franche-Comté, and Brabant have been entered, and the cries of that part of my family rend my soul. I call the French to the aid of the French! I call the Frenchmen of Paris, Brittany, Normandy, Champagne, Burgundy, and the other departments to the aid of their brothers. Will they abandon them in misfortune? Peace and the deliverance of our territory should be our rallying cry. At the sight of this whole people in arms the foreigner will flee, or will consent to peace on the terms I have proposed to him. The question is no longer the recovery of the conquests we have made."

It was necessary to be in a position to thoroughly know the character of the Emperor to understand how much it must have cost him to utter these last words; but from a knowledge of his character also resulted the certainty that it would have cost him less to do what he promised than to say them. It would seem that this was well understood in Paris; for the day on which the *Moniteur* published the reply of his Majesty to the senate, stocks increased in value more than two francs, which the Emperor did not fail to remark with much satisfaction; for as is well known, the rise and decline of stocks was with him the real thermometer of public opinion.

In regard to the conduct of the Corps Législatif, I heard

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it condemned by a man of real merit deeply imbued with republican principles. He uttered one day in my presence these words which struck me: "The Corps Législatif did then what it should have done at all times, except under these circumstances." From the language used by the spokesman of the commission, it is only too evident that the speaker believed in the false promises of the declaration of Frankfort. According to him, or rather according to the commission of which he was after all only the organ, the intention of the foreigners was not to humiliate France; they only wished to keep us within our proper limits, and annul the effects of an ambitious activity which had been so fatal for twenty years to all the nations of Europe. "The propositions of the confederated powers," said the commission, "seem to us honorable for the nation, since they prove that foreigners both fear and respect us." Finally the speaker, continuing his reading, having reached a passage in which allusion was made to the *Empire of the Lily*, added in set phrase that the Rhine, the Alps, the Pyrenees, and the two seas inclosed a vast territory, several provinces of which had not belonged to ancient France, and that nevertheless *the crown royal of France shone brilliantly with glory and majesty among all other diadems.*

At these words the Duke of Massa interrupted the speaker, exclaiming, "What you say is unconstitutional;" to which the speaker vehemently replied, "I see nothing unconstitutional here except your presence," and continued to read his report. The Emperor was each day informed of what took place in the sitting of the Corps Législatif; and I remember that the day on which their report was read he appeared much disturbed, and before retiring walked up and

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down the room in much agitation, like one trying to make some important decision. At last he decided not to allow the publication of the address of the Corps Législatif, which had been communicated to him according to custom. Time pressed; the next day would have been too late, as the address would be circulated in Paris, where the public mind was already much disturbed. The order was consequently given to the minister of general police to have the copy of the report and the address seized at the printing establishment, and to break the forms already set up. Besides this the order was also given to close the doors of the Corps Législatif, which was done, and the legislature thus found itself adjourned.

I heard many persons at this time deeply regret that his Majesty had taken these measures, and, above all, that having taken them he had not stopped there. It was said that since the Corps Législatif was now adjourned by force, it was better, whatever might be the result, to convoke another chamber, and that the Emperor should not recognize the members of the one he had dismissed. His Majesty thought otherwise, and gave the deputies a farewell audience. They came to the Tuileries; and there his only too just resentment found vent in these words:—

"I have suppressed your address, as it was incendiary. Eleven-twelfths of the Corps Législatif are composed of good citizens whom I know and for whom I have much regard; the other twelfth is composed of seditious persons who are devoted to England. Your Commission and its chairman, M. Lainé, are of this number. He corresponds with the Prince Regent, through the lawyer Desèze. I know it, and have proof of it. The other four are of the

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same faction. If there are abuses to be remedied, is this a time for remonstrances, when two hundred thousand Cossacks are crossing our frontiers? Is this the moment to dispute as to individual liberty and safety, when the question is the preservation of political liberty and national independence? The enemy must be resisted; you must follow the example of the Alsatians, Vosges, and inhabitants of Franche-Comté, who wish to march against them, and have applied to me for arms. You endeavor in your address to separate the sovereign from the nation. It is I who here represent the people, who have given me four million of their suffrages. If I believed you I should cede to the enemy more than he demands. You shall have peace in three months or I shall perish. Your address was an insult to me and to the Corps Législatif."

Although the journals were forbidden to repeat the details of this scene, the rumors of it spread through Paris with the rapidity of lightning. The Emperor's words were repeated and commented on; the dismissed deputies sounded them through all the departments. I remember seeing the prime arch-chancellor next day come to the Emperor and request an audience; it was in favor of M. Desèze, whose protector he then was. In spite of the threatening words of his Majesty, he found him not disposed to take severe measures; for his anger had already exhausted itself, as was always the case with the Emperor when he had abandoned himself to his first emotions of fury. However, the fatal misunderstanding between the Corps Législatif and the Emperor, caused by the report of the committee of that body, produced the most grievous effects; and it is easy to conceive how much the enemy must have rejoiced over this,

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as they never failed to be promptly informed by the numerous agents whom they employed in France. It was under these sad circumstances that the year 1813 closed. We will see in future what were the consequences of it, and in fact the history, until now unwritten, of the Emperor's inner life at Fontainebleau; that is to say, of the most painful period of my life.

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## CHAPTER XXI.

Commissioners sent into the departments. — The enemy on the soil of France. — Frenchmen in the enemy's ranks. — The greatest crime in the eyes of the Emperor. — Original plan of his Majesty in relation to Ferdinand VII. — Wishes and demands of the Prince of Spain. — Plan of marriage. — The Prince of Spain and additional embarrassment. — Measures taken by the Emperor. — Surrender of Dantzic and agreement violated. — Surrender of Torgau. — Distressing news from the south. — Instructions to the Duke of Vicenza. — Baron Capelle and the commission of inquiry. — Remarkable coincidence in two events. — Calling out the National Guard of Paris. — The Emperor commander-in-chief. — Composition of the general staff. — Marshal Moncey. — The Emperor's desire to amalgamate all classes of society. — The most honorable title in the Emperor's eyes. — The zeal of M. de Chabrol and the Emperor's friendship. — A master of request and two auditors. — Unknown particulars. — M. Allent and M. de Sainte-Croix. — The wooden leg. — Enthusiasm of the citizens, and deficiency of arms. — Invalid soldiers requesting to enter the service again.

In order to neutralize the effects which might be produced in the provinces by the reports of the members of the Corps Législatif and the correspondence of the alarmists, his Majesty appointed from the members of the conservative senate a certain number of commissioners whom he charged to visit the departments and restore public confidence. This was a most salutary measure, and one which circumstances imperiously demanded; for discouragement began to be felt among the masses of the population, and as is well known in such cases the presence of superior authority restores confidence to those who are only timid. Nevertheless, the enemy were advancing at several points, and had already pressed the soil of Old France. When this

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news reached the Emperor, it afflicted him deeply without overcoming him. At times, however, his indignation broke forth; above all, when he learned from the reports that French emigrants had entered the enemy's ranks, whom he stigmatized by the name of traitors, infamous and wretched creatures, unworthy of pity. I remember that on the occasion of the capture of Hüningen he thus characterized a certain M. de Montjoie, who was now serving in the Bavarian army after taking a German name, which I have forgotten. The Emperor added, however: "At least, he has had the modesty not to keep his French name." In general easy to conciliate on nearly all points, the Emperor was pitiless towards all those who bore arms against their country; and innumerable times I have heard him say that there was no greater crime in his eyes.

In order not to add to the complication of so many conflicting interests which encountered and ran contrary to each other still more each day, the Emperor already had the thought of sending Ferdinand VII. back into Spain. I have the certainty that his Majesty had even made some overtures to him on this subject during his last stay in Paris; but it was the Spanish prince who objected to this, not ceasing, on the contrary, to demand the Emperor's protection. He desired most of all to become the ally of his Majesty, and it was well known that in his letters to his Majesty he urged him incessantly to give him a wife of the Emperor's selection. The Emperor had seriously thought of marrying him to the eldest daughter of King Joseph, which seemed a means of conciliating at the same time the rights of Prince Joseph and those of Ferdinand VII., and King Joseph asked nothing better than to be made a party

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to this arrangement; and from the manner in which he had used his royalty since the commencement of his reign, we may be permitted to think that his Majesty did not greatly object to this. Prince Ferdinand had acquiesced in this alliance, which appeared very agreeable to him, when suddenly at the end of the year 1813 he demanded time; and the course of events placed this affair among the number of those which existed only in intention. Prince Ferdinand left Valençay at last, but later than the Emperor had authorized him to do, and for some time his presence had been only an additional embarrassment. However, the Emperor had no reason to complain of his conduct towards him until after the events of Fontainebleau.

At any rate, in the serious situation of affairs, matters concerning the Prince of Spain were only an incidental matter, no more important than the stay of the Pope at Fontainebleau; the great point, the object which predominated everything, was the defense of the soil of France, which the first days of January found invaded at many points. This was the one thought of his Majesty, which did not prevent him, nevertheless, from entering according to custom into all the duties of his administration; and we will soon see the measures he took to re-establish the national guard of Paris. I have on this subject certain documents and particulars which are little known, from a person whose name I am not permitted to give, but whose position gave him the opportunity of learning all the intricacies of its formation. As all these duties still required for more than a month the presence of his Majesty at Paris, he remained there until the 25th of January.

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But what fatal news he received during those twenty-five days!

First the Emperor learned that the Russians, as unscrupulous as the Austrians in observing the conditions of a capitulation which are usually considered sacred, had just trampled under their feet the stipulations made at Dantzic. In the name of the Emperor Alexander, the Prince of Würtemberg who commanded the siege had acknowledged and guaranteed to General Rapp and the troops placed under his command the right to return to France, which agreement was no more respected than had been a few months before that made with Marshal Saint-Cyr by the Prince of Schwarzenberg; thus the garrison of Dantzic were made prisoners with the same bad faith as that of Dresden had been. This news, which reached him at almost the same time as that of the surrender of Torgau, distressed his Majesty so much the more as it contributed to prove to him that these powerful enemies wished to treat of peace only in name, with a resolution to retire always before a definite conclusion was reached.

At the same period the news from Lyons was in no wise reassuring. The command of this place had been confided to Marshal Augereau, and he was accused of having lacked the energy necessary to foresee or arrest the invasion of the south of France. Further I will not now dwell on this circumstance, proposing in the following chapter to collect my souvenirs which relate more especially to the beginning of the campaign in France, and some circumstances which preceded it. I limit myself consequently to recalling, as far as my memory serves, events which occurred during the last days the Emperor passed in Paris.

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From the 4th of January his Majesty, although having lost, as I said a while since, all hope of inducing the invaders to conclude a peace, which the whole world so much needed, gave his instructions to the Duke of Vicenza, and sent him to the headquarters of the allies; but he was compelled to wait a long time for his passports. At the same time special orders were sent to the prefects of departments in the invaded territory as to the conduct they should pursue under such difficult circumstances. Thinking at the same time that it was indispensable to make an example in order to strengthen the courage of the timid, the Emperor ordered the creation of a commission of inquiry, charged to inquire into the conduct of Baron Capelle, prefect of the department of the Léman at the time of the entrance of the enemy into Geneva. Finally a decree mobilized one hundred and twenty battalions of the National Guard of the Empire, and ordered a levy *en masse* on all the departments of the east of all men capable of bearing arms. Excellent measures doubtless, but vain! Destiny was stronger than even the genius of a great man.

Meanwhile on the 8th of January appeared the decree which called out for active duty thirty thousand men of the National Guard of Paris on the very day when by a singular and fatal coincidence the King of Naples signed a treaty of alliance with Great Britain. The Emperor reserved for himself the chief command of the National Parisian Guard, and constituted the staff as follows: a vice-commander-in-chief, four aides who were major-generals, four adjutant commandants, and eight assistant captains. A legion was formed in each district, and each legion was divided into four battalions subdivided into

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five companies. Next the Emperor appointed the following to superior grades:—

*General vice-commander-in-chief.* — Marshal de Moncey, Duke of Conegliano.

*Aides — major-generals.* — General of division, Count Hullin; Count Bertrand, grand marshal of the palace; Count of Montesquieu, grand chamberlain; Count de Montmorency, chamberlain of the Emperor.

*Adjutant-commandants.* — Baron Laborde, adjutant-commandant of the post of Paris; Count Albert de Brancas, chamberlain of the Emperor; Count Germain, chamberlain of the Emperor; M. Tourton.

*Assistant captains.* — Count Lariboisière; Chevalier Adolphe de Maussion; Messieurs Jules de Montbreton, son of the equerry of the Princess Borghèse; Collin, junior, the younger; Lecordier, junior; Lemoine, junior; Cardon, junior; Malet, junior.

*Chiefs of the twelve Legions.* — First legion, Count de Gontaut, senior; second legion, Count Regnault de Saint Jean d'Angély; third legion, Baron Hottinguer, banker; fourth legion, Count Jaubert, governor of the bank of France; fifth legion, M. Dauberjon de Murinais; sixth legion, M. de Fraguier; seventh legion, M. Lepileur de Brevannes; eighth legion, M. Richard Lenoir; ninth legion, M. Devins de Gaville; tenth legion, the Duke of Cadore; eleventh legion, Count de Choiseul-Praslin, chamberlain of the Emperor; twelfth legion, M. Salleron.

From the names we have just read, we may judge of the incredible insight by which his Majesty was enabled to choose, among the most distinguished persons of the different classes of society, those most popular and most influential from their positions. By the side of the names which had gained glory under the eyes of the Emperor, and by seconding him in his great undertakings, could be found those whose claim to distinction was more ancient

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and recalled noble memories, and finally the heads of the principal industries in the capital. This species of amalgamation delighted the Emperor greatly; and he must have attached to it great political importance, for this idea occupied his attention to such an extent that I have often heard him say, "I wish to confound all classes, all periods, all glories. I desire that no title may be more glorious than the title of Frenchman." Why is it fate decreed that the Emperor should not be allowed time to carry out his extensive plans for the glory and happiness of France of which he so often spoke? The staff of the National Guard and the chiefs of the twelve legions being appointed, the Emperor left the nomination of the other officers, as well as the formation of the legions, to the selection of M. de Chabrol, prefect of the Seine. This worthy magistrate, to whom the Emperor was much attached, displayed under these circumstances the greatest zeal and activity, and in a short time the National Guard presented an imposing appearance. They were armed, equipped, and clothed in the best possible manner; and this ardor, which might be called general, was in these last days one of the consolations which most deeply touched the heart of the Emperor, since he saw in it a proof of the attachment of the Parisians to his person, and an additional motive for feeling secure as to the tranquillity of the capital during his approaching absence. Be that as it may, the bureau of the National Guard was soon formed, and established in the residence which Marshal Moncey inhabited on the Rue du Faubourg Saint-Honoré, near the square Beauveau; and one master of requests and two auditors of the council of state were attached to it. The master of requests, a supe-

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rior officer of engineers, the Chevalier Allent, soon became the soul of the whole administration of the National Guard, no one being more capable than he of giving a lively impulse to an organization which required great promptness. The person from whom I obtained this information, which I intermingle with my personal souvenirs, has assured me that following upon, that is to say, after our departure for Châlons-sur-Marne, M. Allent became still more influential in the National Guard, of which he was the real head. In fact, when King Joseph had received the title of lieutenant-general to the Emperor, which his Majesty conferred on him during the time of his absence, M. Allent found himself attached on one hand to the staff of King Joseph as officer of engineers, and on the other to the vice-general-in-chief in his quality of master of requests. It resulted that he was the mediator and counselor in all communications which were necessarily established between the lieutenant-general of the Emperor and Marshal Moncey, and the promptness of his decisions was a source of great benefit to that good and grave marshal. He signed all letters, "The Marshal, Duke de Conegliano;" and wrote so slowly that M. Allent had, so to speak, time to write the correspondence while the marshal was signing his name. The duties of the two auditors to the council of state were nothing, or nearly so; but these men were by no means nobodies, as has been asserted, though a few of that character of course slipped into the council, since the first condition for holding this office was simply to prove an income of at least six thousand francs. These were Messieurs Ducancel, the dean of the auditors, and M. Robert de Sainte-Croix. A

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shell had broken the latter's leg during the return from Moscow; and this brave young man, a captain of cavalry, had returned, seated astride a cannon, from the banks of the Beresina to Wilna. Having little physical strength, but gifted with a strong mind, M. Robert de Sainte-Croix owed it to his moral courage not to succumb; and after undergoing the amputation of his leg, left the sword for the pen, and it was thus he became auditor to the council of state.

The week after the National Guard of the city of Paris had been called into service, the chiefs of the twelve legions and the general staff were admitted to take the oath of fidelity at the Emperor's hands. The National Guard had already been organized into legions; but the want of arms was keenly felt, and many citizens could procure only lances, and those who could not obtain guns or buy them found themselves thereby chilled in their ardor to equip themselves. Nevertheless, the Citizen Guard soon enrolled the desired number of thirty thousand men, and by degrees it occupied the different posts of the capital; and whilst fathers of families and citizens employed in domestic work were enrolled without difficulty, those who had already paid their debts to their country on the battlefield also demanded to be allowed to serve her again, and to shed for her the last drop of their blood. Invalided soldiers begged to resume their service. Hundreds of these brave soldiers forgot their sufferings, and covered with honorable wounds went forth again to confront the enemy. Alas! very few of those who then left the Hôtel des Invalides were fortunate enough to return.

Meanwhile the moment of the Emperor's departure ap-

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proached; but before setting out he bade a touching adieu to the National Guard, as we shall see in the next chapter, and confided the regency to the Empress as he had formerly intrusted it to her during the campaign in Dresden. Alas! this time it was not necessary to make a long journey before the Emperor was at the head of his army.

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## CHAPTER XXII.

The campaign of miracles. — A solemn promise broken. — Violation of Swiss territory. — The allied troops in the Breisgau. — The bridge of Bâle. — French towns occupied by the enemy. — Energy of the Emperor increasing with the danger. — Carnot governor of Antwerp, and satisfaction of the Emperor. — Defection of the King of Naples. — The King of Naples and the Prince Royal of Sweden. — The Emperor's anger. — The eve of departure. — The officers of the National Guard at the Tuileries. — Remarkable words of the Emperor. — A touching scene. — The King of Rome and the Empress under the safeguard of the Parisians. — A scene of enthusiasm and emotion. — Tears of the Empress. — Spontaneous oath. — M. de Bourrienne at the Tuileries. — Departure for the army. — Colonel Bouland and the cross of the Legion of Honor. — The indefatigable braves. — A singular meeting. — The old country curate recognized by the Emperor. — The ecclesiastical guide. — Arrival before Brienne. — Blücher in flight. — The Emperor believes Blücher a prisoner. — Recollections of ten years, and difference in the times. — Striking changes for all. — Atrocious cruelty. — Violation, pillage, and burning. — Official falsehoods concerning the allies. — Detestable makers of jokes. — The Emperor Alexander's indifference as to preventing disorder. — The field of La Rothière. — A child's combat and a bloody battle. — Retreat towards Troyes. — Imminent danger of the Emperor, and his sword cutting the wind. — The war of the eagle and the ravens. — The army of Blücher.

We are now about to begin the campaign of miracles; but before relating the events which I witnessed on this campaign, during which I, so to speak, never left the Emperor, it is necessary that I here inscribe some souvenirs which may be considered as a necessary introduction. It is well known that the Swiss cantons had solemnly declared to the Emperor that they would not allow their territory to be violated, and that they would do everything possible to oppose the passage of the allied armies who were marching

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on the frontiers of France by way of the Breisgau. The Emperor, in order to stop them on their march, relied upon the destruction of the bridge of Bâle; but this bridge was not destroyed, and Switzerland, instead of maintaining her promised neutrality, entered into the coalition against France. The foreign armies passed the Rhine at Bâle, at Schaffhausen, and at Mannheim. Capitulations made with the generals of the confederated troops in regard to the French garrisons of Dantzic, Dresden, and other strong towns had been, as we have seen, openly violated. Thus Marshal Gouvion Saint-Cyr and his army corps had been, contrary to the stipulations contained in the treaties, surrounded by superior forces, disarmed, and conducted as prisoners to Austria; and twenty thousand men, the remains of the garrison of Dantzic, were thus arrested by order of the Emperor Alexander, and conveyed to the Russian deserts. Geneva opened its gates to the enemy in the following January. Vesoul, Epinal, Nancy, Langres, Dijon, Châlons-sur-Saône, and Bar-sur-Aube were occupied by the allies.

The Emperor, in proportion as the danger became more pressing, displayed still more his energy and indefatigable activity. He urged the organization of new levies, and in order to pay the most urgent expenses drew thirty millions from his secret treasury in the vaults of the pavilion Marsan. The levies of conscripts were, however, made with difficulty; for in the course of the year 1813 alone, one million forty thousand soldiers had been summoned to the field, and France could no longer sustain such enormous drains. Meanwhile veterans came from all parts to be enrolled; and General Carnot offered his services to the

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Emperor, who was much touched by this proceeding, and confided to him the defense of Antwerp. The zeal and courage with which the general acquitted himself of this important mission is well known. Movable columns and corps of partisans placed themselves under arms in the departments of the east, and a few rich proprietors levied and organized companies of volunteers, while select cavalry formed themselves into corps, the cavaliers of which equipped themselves at their own expense.

In the midst of these preparations the Emperor received news which moved him deeply, — the King of Naples had just joined the enemies of the French. On a previous occasion, when his Majesty had seen the Prince Royal of Sweden, after having been marshal and prince of the Empire, enter into a coalition against his native country, I heard him break forth into reproaches and exclamations of indignation, although the King of Sweden had more than one reason to offer in his own defense, being alone in the north, and shut in by powerful enemies against whom he was entirely unable to struggle, even had the interests of his new country been inseparable from those of France. By refusing to enter into the coalition he would have drawn on Sweden the anger of her formidable neighbors, and with the throne he would have sacrificed and fruitlessly ruined the nation which had adopted him. It was not to the Emperor he owed his elevation. But King Joachim, on the contrary, owed everything to the Emperor; for it was he who had given him one of his sisters as a wife, who had given him a throne, and had treated him as well as, and even better than, if he had been a brother. It was consequently the duty of the King of Naples as well as his

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interest not to separate his cause from that of France; for if the Emperor fell, how could the kings of his own family, whom he had made, hope to stand? Both King Joseph and Jérôme had well understood this, and also the brave and loyal Prince Eugène, who supported courageously in Italy the cause of his adopted father. If the King of Naples had united with him they could together have marched on Vienna, and this audacious but at the same time perfectly practicable movement would have infallibly saved France.

These are some of the reflections I heard the Emperor make in speaking of the treachery of the King of Naples, though in the first moments, however, he did not reason so calmly. His anger was extreme, and with it was mingled grief and emotions near akin to pity: "Murat!" cried he, "Murat betray me! Murat sell himself to the English! The poor creature! He imagines that if the allies succeed in overthrowing me they would leave him the throne on which I have seated him. Poor fool! The worst fate that can befall him is that his treachery should succeed; for he would have less pity to expect from his new allies than from me."

The evening before his departure for the army, the Emperor received the corps of officers of the National Parisian Guard, and the reception was held in the great hall of the Tuileries. This ceremony was sad and imposing. His Majesty presented himself before the assembly with her Majesty the Empress, who held by the hand the King of Rome, aged three years lacking two months. Although his speech on this occasion is doubtless already well known, I repeat it here, as I do not wish that these beautiful and

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solemn words of my former master should be wanting in my *Memoirs*:—

"GENTLEMEN, *Officers of the National Guard*, — It is with much pleasure I see you assembled around me. I leave to-night to place myself at the head of the army. On leaving the capital I place with confidence in your care my wife and my son on whom rests so many hopes. I owe you this proof of my confidence, in return for all the innumerable proofs you have repeatedly given me in the important events of my life. I shall depart with my mind free from anxiety, since they will be under your faithful protection. I leave with you what is dearest to me in the world, next to France, and I freely commit it to your care.

It may occur that in consequence of the maneuvers I am about to make, the enemy may find the opportunity of approaching your walls. If this should take place, remember that it will be an affair of only a few days, and I will soon come to your assistance. I recommend to you to preserve unity among yourselves, and to resist all the insinuations by which efforts will be made to divide you. There will not be wanting endeavors to shake your fidelity to duty, but I rely upon you to repel these perfidious attempts."

At the end of this discourse, the Emperor bent his looks on the Empress and the King of Rome, whom his august mother held in her arms, and presenting both by his looks and gestures to the assembly this child whose expressive countenance seemed to reflect the solemnity of the occasion, he added in an agitated voice, "I confide him to you, Messieurs; I confide him to the love of my faithful city of Paris!" At these words of his Majesty innumerable shouts were heard, and innumerable arms were raised swearing to defend this priceless trust. The Empress, bathed in tears and pale with the emotion by which she was agitated, would have fallen if the Emperor had not

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supported her in his arms. At this sight the enthusiasm reached its height, tears flowed from all eyes, and there was not one present who did not seem willing as he retired to shed his blood for the Imperial family. On this occasion I again saw for the first time M. de Bourrienne at the palace; he wore, if I am not mistaken, the uniform of captain in the National Guard.

On the 25th of January the Emperor set out for the army, after conferring the regency on her Majesty the Empress; and that night we reached Châlons-sur-Marne. His arrival stopped the progress of the enemy's army and the retreat of our troops. Two days after he, in his turn, attacked the allies at Saint-Dizier. His Majesty's entrance into this town was marked by most touching manifestations of enthusiasm and devotion. The very moment the Emperor alighted, a former colonel, M. Bouland, an old man more than seventy years old, threw himself at his Majesty's feet, expressing to him the deep grief which the sight of foreign bayonets had caused him, and his confidence that the Emperor would drive them from the soil of France. His Majesty assisted the old veteran to rise, and said to him cheerfully that he would spare nothing to accomplish such a favorable prediction. The allies conducted themselves in the most inhuman manner at Saint-Dizier: women and old men died or were made ill under the cruel treatment which they received; and it may be imagined what a cause of rejoicing his Majesty's arrival was to the country.

The enemy having been repulsed at Saint-Dizier, the Emperor learned that the army of Silesia was being concentrated on Brienne, and immediately set out on the march

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through the forest of Déo, the brave soldiers who followed him appearing as indefatigable as he. He halted at the village of Éclaron, where his Majesty paid a certain sum to the inhabitants to repair their church, which the enemy had destroyed. The surgeon of this town advanced to thank the Emperor; and his Majesty examining him attentively said to him, "You have served in the army, Monsieur?" — "Yes, Sire; I was in the army of Egypt." — "Why have you no cross?" — "Sire, because I have never asked for it." — "Monsieur, you are only the more worthy of it. I hope you will wear the one I shall give you." And in a few moments his certificate was signed by the Emperor, and handed to the new chevalier, whom the Emperor recommended to give the most careful attention to the sick and wounded of our army who might be committed to his care.[1]

On entering Mézières his Majesty was received by the authorities of the city, the clergy, and the National Guard. "Messieurs," said the Emperor to the National Guard who pressed around him, "we fight to day for our firesides; let us defend them in such a manner that the Cossacks may not come to warm themselves beside them. They are bad guests, who will leave no place for you. Let us show them that every Frenchman is born a soldier, and a brave one!" His Majesty on receiving the homage of the curate, perceiving that this ecclesiastic regarded him with extreme

[1] It is known that the Emperor was not lavish in the distribution of the Cross of Honor. Of this fact I here give an additional proof. He was much pleased with the services of M. Veyrat, inspector general of police, and he desired the Cross. I presented petitions to this effect to his Majesty, who said to me one day, "*I am well satisfied with Veyrat. He serves me well, and I will give him as much money as he wishes; but the Cross, never!*" — CONSTANT.

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interest and agitation, consequently considered the good priest more attentively, and soon recognized in him one of the former regents of the college of Brienne. "What! is it you, my dear master?" cried the Emperor. "You have, then, never left your retirement! So much the better, since for that reason you will be only the better able to serve the cause of your native land. I need not ask if you know the country around here." — "Sire," replied the curate, "I could find my way with my eyes shut." — "Come with us, then; you will be our guide, and we will converse." The worthy priest immediately saddled his well-broken horse, and placed himself in the center of the Imperial staff.

The same day we arrived before Brienne. The Emperor's march had been so secret and so rapid that the Prussians had heard nothing of it until he suddenly appeared before their eyes. A few general officers were made prisoners; and Blücher himself, who was quietly coming out of the château, had only time to turn and fly as quickly as he could, under a shower of balls from our advance guard. The Emperor thought for a moment that the Prussian general had been taken, and exclaimed, "We have got that old swash-buckler. Now the campaign will not be long." The Russians who were established in the village set it on fire, and an engagement took place in the midst of the flames. Night arrived, but the combat still continued; and in the space of twelve hours the village was taken and retaken many times. The Emperor was furious that Blücher should have escaped. As he returned to headquarters, which had been established at Mézières, his Majesty narrowly escaped being pierced through with the lance of a

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Cossack; but before the Emperor perceived the movement of the wretch, the brave Colonel Gourgaud, who was marching behind his Majesty, shot the Cossack dead with his pistol.

The Emperor had with him only fifteen thousand men, and they had waged an equal struggle with eighty thousand foreign soldiers. At the close of the combat the Prussians retreated to Bar-sur-Aube; and his Majesty established himself in the château of Brienne, where he passed two nights. I recalled during this stay the one that I had made ten years before in this same château of Brienne, when the Emperor was on his way to Milan with the intention of adding the title of King of Italy to that of Emperor of the French. "To-day," I said to myself, "not only is Italy lost to him, but here in the center of the French Empire, and a few leagues from his capital, the Emperor is defending himself against innumerable enemies!" The first time I saw Brienne, the Emperor was received as a sovereign by a noble family who fifteen years before had welcomed him as a *protégé*. He had there revived the happiest remembrances of his childhood and youth; and in comparing himself in 1805 with what he had been at the École Militaire had spoken with pride *of the path he had trod*. In 1814, on the 31st of January, the end to which this path was tending began to be seen. It is not that I wish to announce myself as having foreseen the Emperor's fall, for I did not go so far as that. Accustomed to see him trust to his star, the greater part of those who surrounded him trusted it no less than he; but nevertheless we could not conceal from ourselves that great changes had taken place. To delude ourselves in this respect it

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would have been necessary to close our eyes that we might neither see nor hear this multitude of foreigners, whom we had until now seen only in their own country, and who, in their turn, were now in our midst.

At each step, in fact, we found terrible proofs of the enemy's presence. After taking possession of the towns and villages, they had arrested the inhabitants, maltreated them with saber-strokes and the butt ends of their guns, stripping them of their clothing, and compelling those to follow them whom they thought capable of serving as guides on their march; and if they were not guided as they expected they killed with the sword or shot their unfortunate prisoners. Everywhere the inhabitants were made to furnish provisions, drink, cattle, forage, in a word, everything that could be useful to an army making enormous requisitions; and when they had exhausted all the resources of their victims, they finished their work of destruction by pillage and burning. The Prussians, and above all the Cossacks, were remarkable for their brutal ferocity. Sometimes these hideous savages entered the houses by main force, shared among themselves everything that fell into their hands, loaded their horses with the plunder, and broke to pieces what they could not carry away. Sometimes, not finding sufficient to satisfy their greed, they broke down the doors and windows, demolished the ceiling in order to tear out the beams, and made of these pieces and the furniture, which was too heavy to be carried away, a fire, which being communicated to the roofs of neighboring houses consumed in a moment the dwellings of the unhappy inhabitants, and forced them to take refuge in the woods.

Sometimes the more wealthy inhabitants gave them

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what they demanded, especially brandy, of which they drank eagerly, thinking by this compliance to escape their ferocity; but these barbarians, heated by drink, then carried their excesses to the last degree. They seized girls, women, and servants, and beat them unmercifully, in order to compel them to drink brandy until they fell in a complete state of intoxication. Many women and young girls had courage and strength to defend themselves against these brigands; but they united three or four against one, and often to avenge themselves for the resistance of these poor creatures mutilated and slew them, after having first violated them, or threw them into the midst of the bivouac fires. Farms were burned up, and families recently opulent or in comfortable circumstances were reduced in an instant to despair and poverty. Husbands and old men were slain with the sword while attempting to defend the honor of their wives and daughters; and when poor mothers attempted to approach the fires to warm the children at their breasts, they were burned or killed by the explosion of packages of cartridges, which the Cossacks threw intentionally into the fire; and the cries of pain and agony were stifled by the bursts of laughter from these monsters.

I should never end if I attempted to relate all the atrocities committed by these foreign hordes. It was the custom at the time of the Restoration to say that the complaints and narrations of those who were exposed to these excesses were exaggerated by fear or hatred. I have even heard very dignified persons jest pleasantly over the pretty ways of the Cossacks. But these wits always kept themselves at a distance from the theater of war, and had the good fortune to inhabit departments which suffered neither from

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the first nor second invasion. I would not advise them to address their pleasantries to the unfortunate inhabitants of Champagne, or of the departments of the east in general. It has been maintained also that the allied sovereigns and the general officers of the Russian and Prussian army severely forbade all violence in their regular troops, and that the atrocities were committed by undisciplined and ungovernable bands of Cossacks. I have been in a position to learn, on many occasions, especially at Troyes, proofs to the contrary. This town has not forgotten, doubtless, how the Princes of Würtemberg and Hohenlohe and the Emperor Alexander himself justified the burnings, pillage, violations, and numerous assassinations committed under their very eyes, not only by the Cossacks, but also by regularly enlisted and disciplined soldiers. No measures were taken by the sovereigns or by their generals to put an end to such atrocities, and nevertheless when they left a town there was needed only an order from them to remove at once the hordes of Cossacks who devastated the country.

The field of the La Rothière was, as I have said, the rendezvous of the pupils of the military school of Brienne. It was there that the Emperor, when a child, had foreshadowed in his engagement with the scholars his gigantic combats. The engagement at La Rothière was hotly contested; and the enemy obtained, only at the price of much blood, an advantage which they owed entirely to their numerical superiority. In the night which followed this unequal struggle, the Emperor ordered the retreat from Troyes. On returning to the château after the battle, his Majesty narrowly escaped an imminent danger. He found himself surrounded

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by a troop of uhlans, and drew his sword to defend himself. M. Jardin, junior, his equerry, who followed the Emperor closely, received a ball in his arm. Several chasseurs of the escort were wounded, but they at last succeeded in extricating his Majesty. I can assert that his Majesty showed the greatest self-possession in all encounters of this kind. On that day, as I unbuckled his sword-belt, he drew it half out of the scabbard, saying, "Do you know, Constant, the wretches have made me cut the wind with this? The rascals are too impudent. It is necessary to teach them a lesson, that they may learn to hold themselves at a respectful distance."

It is not my intention to write the history of this campaign in France, in which the Emperor displayed an activity and energy which excited to the highest point the admiration of those who surrounded him. Unfortunately, the advantages which he had obtained gradually exhausted his own troops, while only creating losses in the enemy's, which they easily repaired. It was, as M. Bourrienne has well said, a combat of an Alpine eagle with a flock of ravens: "The eagle may kill them by hundreds. Each blow of his beak is the death of an enemy; but the ravens return in still greater numbers, and continue their attack on the eagle until they at last overcome him." At Champ-Aubert, at Montmirail, at Nangis, at Montereau, and at Arcis, and in twenty other engagements, the Emperor obtained the advantage by his genius and by the courage of our army; but it was all in vain. Hardly had these masses of the enemy been scattered, before fresh ones were formed again in front of our soldiers, exhausted by continuous battles and forced marches. The army, especially that which

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Blücher commanded, seemed to revive of itself, and whenever beaten reappeared with forces equal, if not superior, to those which had been destroyed or dispersed. How can such an immense superiority of numbers be indefinitely resisted?

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## CHAPTER XXIII.

Renewed prodigies in Italy. — Personal courage of the Emperor. — The Emperor's words to his soldiers. — A shell bursts near the Emperor. — The Emperor awakes frequently during the night. — His Majesty's extreme kindness to me. — No dishonorable peace. — Forgetfulness atoned for. — I sleep in the Emperor's chair. — His Majesty seats himself on his bed in order not to awake me. — Adorable words of the Emperor. — His Majesty decides to make peace. — Success followed by renewed indecision. — The Emperor and the Duke of Bassano. — Departure for Sézanne. — A succession of triumphs. — Captured generals at the Emperor's table. — Combat of Nangis. — Blücher almost taken prisoner. — The eve of the battle at Méry. — The Emperor on a bundle of reeds. — A flock of snipes and the Emperor's words. — The movement towards Anglure. — Burning of Méry. — Critical position of the allies. — Critical position of M. Ansart. — An usher guides the Emperor. — Fear of cannon. — A bridge constructed in an hour under the enemy's fire. — The Emperor exceedingly thirsty and a young girl's courage. — The Emperor's headquarters in a wheelwright's shop. — Prisoners and banners sent to Paris. — The delicate mission of M. de Saint-Aignan. — Extreme anger of the Emperor. — Disgrace of M. Saint-Aignan and quick restoration to favor. — The enemy abandons Troyes by capitulation. — A severe order. — Emblems and colors of the former dynasty. — Council of war and the death penalty. — Execution of Chevalier Gonault.

THE Emperor had never shown himself so worthy of admiration as during this fatal campaign in France, when, struggling against misfortunes, he performed over again the prodigies of his first wars in Italy, when fortune smiled on him. His career had begun with an attack, and the end was marked by the most magnificent defense recorded in the annals of war. And it may be said with truth that at all times and everywhere his Majesty showed himself both the perfect general and the soldier, under all circumstances

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furnishing an example of personal courage to such an extent, indeed, that all those who surrounded him, and whose existence was dependent on his own, were seriously alarmed. For instance, as is well known, the Emperor, at the battle of Montereau, pointed the pieces of artillery himself, recklessly exposed himself to the enemy's fire, and said to his soldiers, who were much alarmed at his danger and attempted to remove him, "Let me alone, my friends; the bullet which is to kill me has not yet been molded."

At Arcis the Emperor again fought as a common soldier, and more than once drew his sword in order to cut his way through the midst of the enemy who surrounded him. A shell fell a few steps from his horse. The animal, frightened, jumped to one side, and nearly unhorsed the Emperor, who, with his field-glass in his hand, was at the moment occupied in examining the battlefield. His Majesty settled himself again firmly in his saddle, stuck his spurs in the horse's sides, forced him to approach and put his nose to it. Just then the shell burst, and, by an almost incredible chance, neither the Emperor nor his horse was even wounded.

In more than one similar circumstance the Emperor seemed, during this campaign, to put his life at a venture; and yet it was only in the last extremity that he abandoned the hope of preserving his throne. It was a painful sacrifice to him to treat with the enemy so long as they occupied French territory; for he wished to purge the soil of France of the presence of foreigners before entering into any agreement with them whatever. And this feeling was the reason of his hesitation and refusal to accept the peace which was offered him on various occasions.

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On the 8th of February, the Emperor, at the end of a long discussion with two or three of his intimate advisers, retired very late, and in a state of extreme preoccupation. He woke me often during the night, complaining of being unable to sleep, and made me extinguish and relight his lamp again and again. About five o'clock in the morning I was called again. I was almost fainting with fatigue, which his Majesty noticed, and said to me kindly, —

"You are worn out, my poor Constant; we are making a severe campaign, are we not? But hold out only a little longer; you will soon rest."

Encouraged by the sympathizing tones of his Majesty, I took the liberty of replying that no one could think of complaining of the fatigue or privations he endured, since they were shared by his Majesty; but that, nevertheless, the desire and hope of every one were for peace. "Ah, yes," replied the Emperor, with a kind of subdued violence, "they will have peace; they will realize what a dishonorable peace is!" I kept silence; his Majesty's chagrin distressed me deeply; and I wished at this moment that his army could have been composed of men of iron like himself, then he would have made peace only on the frontiers of France.

The tone of kindness and familiarity in which the Emperor spoke to me on this occasion recalls another circumstance which I neglected to relate in its proper place, and which I must not pass over in silence, since it furnishes such a fine example of his Majesty's conduct towards the persons of his service, and especially myself. Roustan witnessed the occurrence, and it was from him I learned the opening details.

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In one of his campaigns beyond the Rhine (I do not remember which), I had passed several nights in succession without sleep, and was exhausted. The Emperor went out at eleven o'clock, and remained three or four hours; and I seated myself in his armchair, near his table, to await his return, intending to rise and retire as soon as I heard him enter, but was so exhausted with fatigue that sleep suddenly overtook me, and I dropped into a deep slumber, my head resting on my arm, and my arm on his Majesty's table. The Emperor returned at last with Marshal Berthier, and followed by Roustan. I heard nothing. The Prince de Neuchâtel wished to approach and shake me that I might awake and resign to his Majesty his seat and table; but the Emperor stopped him, saying, "Let the poor fellow sleep; he has passed many nights with none." Then, as there was no other chair in the apartment, the Emperor seated himself on the edge of the bed, made the marshal also seat himself there, and they held a long conversation while I continued to sleep. At length, needing one of the maps from the table on which my arm rested, his Majesty, although he drew it out most cautiously, awoke me; and I immediately sprang to my feet, overwhelmed with confusion, and excusing myself for the liberty I had so involuntarily taken. "*Monsieur* Constant," the Emperor then said with an exceedingly kind smile, "I am distressed to have disturbed you. Pray, excuse me." I trust that this, in addition to what I have already related of the same nature, may serve as an answer to those who have accused him of harshness to his servants. I resume my recital of the events of 1814.

On the night of the 8th the Emperor seemed to have

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decided on making peace; and the whole night was spent in preparing dispatches, which on the morning of the 9th at nine o'clock were brought to him to sign; but he had changed his mind. At seven o'clock he had received news from the Russian and Prussian army; and when the Duke of Bassano entered, holding in his hand the dispatches to be signed, his Majesty was asleep over the maps where he had stuck his pens. "Ah, it is you," said he to his minister; "we will no longer need those. We are now laying plans to attack Blücher; he has taken the road from Montmirail. I am about to start. To-morrow I will fight, and again the next day. The aspect of affairs is on the point of changing, as we shall see. Let us not be precipitate; there is time enough to make such a peace as they propose." An hour after we were on the road to Sézanne.

For several days in succession after this, the heroic efforts of the Emperor and his brave soldiers were crowned with brilliant success. Immediately on their arrival at Champ-Aubert, the army, finding itself in presence of the Russian army corps, against which they had already fought at Brienne, fell on it without even waiting to take repose, separated it from the Prussian army, and took the general-in-chief and several general officers prisoners. His Majesty, whose conduct towards his conquered foes was always honorable and generous, made them dine at his table, and treated them with the greatest consideration.

The enemy were again beaten at the Farm des Frénaux by Marshals Ney and Mortier, and by the Duke of Ragusa at Vaux-Champs, where Blücher again narrowly escaped being made prisoner. At Nangis the Emperor dispersed one hundred and fifty thousand men commanded

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by the Prince von Schwarzenberg, and ordered in pursuit of them Marshals Oudinot, Kellermann, Macdonald, and Generals Treilhard and Gérard.

The eve of the battle of Méry, the Emperor inspected all the surroundings of this little town; and his observing glasses rested on an immense extent of marshy ground in the midst of which is the village of Bagneux, and at a short distance the village of Anglure, past which the Aube flows. After rapidly passing over the unsafe ground of these dangerous marshes, he set foot on solid ground, and seated himself on a bundle of reeds, and there, leaning against the wall of a night-hunter's hut, he unrolled his map of the campaign; and, after examining it a few moments, remounted his horse and set off at a gallop.

At this moment a flock of teal and snipe flew up before his Majesty; and he exclaimed laughingly: "Go, go, my beauties; make room for other game." His Majesty said to those around him, "This time we have them!"

The Emperor was galloping towards Anglure, in order to see if the hill of Baudemont, which is near this village, was occupied by the artillery, when the noise of cannon heard in the direction of Méry compelled him to retrace his steps; and he accordingly returned to Méry, saying to the officers who accompanied him, "Let us gallop, gentlemen, our enemies are in a hurry; we should not keep them waiting." A half hour after he was on the battlefield. Enormous clouds of smoke from the burning of Méry were driven in the faces of the Russian and Prussian columns, and partly hid the maneuvers of the French army. At that moment everything indicated the success of the plans the Emperor had formed that

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morning in the marshes of Bagneux, for all went well. His Majesty foresaw the defeat of the allies, and France saved, while at Anglure all were given up to despair. The population of many villages shuddered at the approach of the enemy; for not a piece of cannon was there to cut off their retreat, not a soldier to prevent them from crossing the river.

The position of the allies was so exceedingly critical that the whole French army believed them destroyed, as they had plunged with all their artillery into the marshes, and would have been mowed down by the shower of balls from our cannon if they had remained there. But suddenly they were seen to make a new effort, place themselves in line of battle, and prepare to pass the Aube. The Emperor, who could pursue them no farther without exposing his army to the danger of being swallowed up in the marshes, arrested the impetuosity of his soldiers, believing that the heights of Baudemont were covered with artillery ready to overwhelm the enemy; but hearing not a single shot in this direction, he hurried to Sézanne to hasten the advance of the troops, only to learn that those he expected to find there had been sent toward Fère Champenoise.

During this interval, a man named Ansart, a land owner at Anglure, mounted his horse, and hurried at the utmost speed to Sézanne in order to inform the marshal that the enemy were pursued by the Emperor, and about to cross the Aube. Having reached the Duke, and seeing that the corps he commanded was not taking the road to Anglure, he hastened to speak. Apparently the Emperor's orders had not been received; for the marshal would not listen to him, treated him as a spy, and

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it was with much difficulty this brave man escaped being shot.

While this scene was taking place, his Majesty had already reached Sézanne; and seeing many inhabitants of this village around him, he requested some one to guide him to Fère Champenoise, whereupon a bailiff presented himself. The Emperor immediately set out, escorted by the officers who had accompanied him to Sézanne, and left the town, saying to his guide, "Go in front, monsieur, and take the shortest road." Arrived at a short distance from the battlefield of Fère Champenoise, his Majesty saw that every report of the artillery made the poor bailiff start. "You are afraid," said the Emperor to him. "No, Sire." — "Then, what makes you dodge your head?" — "It is because I am not accustomed like your Majesty to hearing all this uproar." — "One should accustom himself to everything. Fear nothing; keep on." But the guide, more dead than alive, reined in his horse, and trembled in every limb. "Come, come; I see you are really afraid. Go behind me." He obeyed, turned his horse's head, and galloped as far as Sézanne without stopping, promising himself most faithfully never again to serve as guide to the Emperor on such an occasion.

At the battle of Méry, the Emperor, under the very fire of the enemy, had a little bridge thrown over the river which flows near the town. This bridge was constructed in an hour by means of ladders fastened together, and supported by wooden beams; but as this was not sufficient, it was necessary that planks should be placed on this. None could be found, however; for those who might have been able to procure them did not dare to

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approach the exposed spot his Majesty occupied at this moment. Impatient, and even angry, because he could not obtain the planks for this bridge, his Majesty had the shutters of several large houses a short distance from the river taken down, and had them placed and nailed down under his own eyes. During this work he was tormented by intense thirst, and was about to dip water up in his hand to slake it, when a young girl, who had braved danger in order to draw near the Emperor, ran to a neighboring house, and brought him a glass of water and some wine, which he eagerly drank.

Astonished to see this young girl in so perilous a place, the Emperor said to her, smiling, "You would make a brave soldier, Mademoiselle; and if you are willing to wear epaulets you shall be one of my *aides-de-camp*." The young girl blushed, and made a courtesy to the Emperor, and was going away, when he held out his hand to her, and she kissed it. "Later," he said, "come to Paris, and remind me of the service you have rendered me to-day. You will be satisfied of my gratitude." She thanked the Emperor and withdrew, very proud of his words of commendation.

The day of the battle of Nangis an Austrian officer came in the evening to headquarters, and had a long, secret conference with his Majesty. Forty-eight hours after, at the close of the engagement at Méry, appeared a new envoy from the Prince von Schwarzenberg, with a reply from the Emperor of Austria to the confidential letter which his Majesty had written two days before to his father-in-law. We had left Méry in flames; and in the little hammock of Châtres, where headquarters had been

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established, there could no shelter be found for his Majesty except in the shop of a wheelwright; and the Emperor passed the night there, working, or lying on the bed all dressed, without sleeping. It was there also he received the Austrian envoy, the Prince of Lichtenstein. The prince long remained in conversation with his Majesty; and though nothing was known of the subject of their conversation, no one doubted that it related to peace. After the departure of the prince, the Emperor was in extraordinarily high spirits, which affected all those around him.

Our army had taken from the enemy thousands of prisoners; Paris had just received the Russian and Prussian banners taken at Nangis and Montereau; the Emperor had put to flight the foreign sovereigns, who even feared for a time that they might not be able to regain the frontiers; and the effect of so much success had been to restore to his Majesty his former confidence in his good fortune, though this was unfortunately only a dangerous illusion.

The Prince of Lichtenstein had hardly left headquarters when M. de Saint-Aignan, the brother-in-law of the Duke of Vicenza, and equerry of the Emperor, arrived. M. de Saint-Aignan went, I think, to his brother-in-law, who was at the Congress of Châtillon, or at least had been; for the sessions of this congress had been suspended for several days. It seems that before leaving Paris M. de Saint-Aignan held an interview with the Duke of Rovigo and another minister, and they had given him a verbal message to the Emperor. This mission was both delicate and difficult. He would have much preferred that these gentlemen should have sent in writing the communications which they insisted he should bear to his Majesty, but they refused;

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and as a faithful servant M. de Saint-Aignan performed his duty, and prepared to speak the whole truth, whatever danger he might incur by so doing.

When he arrived at the wheelwright's shop at Châtres, the Emperor, as we have just seen, was abandoning himself to most brilliant dreams; which circumstance was most unfortunate for M. de Saint-Aignan, since he was the bearer of disagreeable news. He came, as we have learned since, to announce to his Majesty that he should not count upon the public mind at the capital, since they were murmuring at the prolongation of the war, and desired that the Emperor should seize the occasion of making peace. It has even been stated that the word *disaffection* was uttered during this secret conference by the sincere and truthful lips of M. de Saint-Aignan. I cannot assert that this is true; for the door was closely shut, and M. de Saint-Aignan spoke in a low tone. It is certain, however, that his report and his candor excited his Majesty's anger to the highest degree; and in dismissing him with an abruptness he had certainly not merited, the Emperor raised his voice to such a pitch as to be heard outside. When M. de Saint-Aignan withdrew, and his Majesty summoned me to my duties near him, I found him much agitated, and pale with anger. A few hours after this scene the Emperor ordered his horse, and M. de Saint-Aignan, who had resumed his duties as equerry, approached to hold his stirrup; but as soon as the Emperor perceived him he threw on him an angry glance, made him a sign to withdraw, exclaiming loudly, "*Mesgrigny!*" This was Baron de Mesgrigny, another of his Majesty's squires. In compliance with his Majesty's wishes, M. de Mesgrigny performed the duties of M. de Saint-Aignan,

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who withdrew to the rear of the army to wait till the storm should be past. At the end of a few days his disgrace was ended, and all who knew him rejoiced; for the Baron de Saint-Aignan was beloved by all for his affability and loyalty.

From Châtres the Emperor marched on Troyes. The enemy who occupied this town seemed at first disposed to defend themselves there, but soon yielded, and evacuated it at the close of a capitulation. During the short time the allies passed at Troyes, the Royalists had publicly announced their hatred to the Emperor, and their adherence to the allied powers, who came, they said, only to establish the Bourbons on the throne, and even had the imprudence to display the white flag and white cockade; and the foreign troops had consequently protected them, while exercising extreme harshness and severity towards those inhabitants who held contrary opinions.

Unfortunately for the Royalists they were in a very feeble minority, and the favor shown to them by the Russians and Prussians led the populace oppressed by the latter to hate the *protégés* as much as their protectors.

Even before the entrance of the Emperor into Troyes, Royalist proclamations addressed to the officers of his household or the army had fallen into his hands. He had showed no anger, but had urged those who had received, or who might receive, communications of this nature, to destroy them, and to inform no one of the contents. On his arrival at Troyes his Majesty rendered a decree proclaiming penalty of death against all Frenchmen in the service of the enemy, and those who wore the emblems and decorations of the ancient dynasty. An unfortunate *émigré*, accused before a

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council of war, was convicted of having worn the cross of St. Louis and the white cockade during the stay of the allies at Troyes, and of having furnished to the foreign generals all the information in his power.

The council pronounced sentence of death, for the proofs were positive, and the law not less so; and Chevalier Gonault fell a victim to his ill-judged devotion to a cause which was still far from appearing national, especially in the departments occupied by the allied armies, and was executed according to military usage.

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## CHAPTER XXIV.

**Negotiations for an armistice. — Blücher and one hundred thousand men. — The Prince von Schwarzenberg taking the offensive. — A ruse of war. — The Emperor meets Blücher. — Halt at the village of Herbisse. — The good curate. — The Emperor's politeness. — Singular quarters for a night. — Marshal Lefebvre as a theologian. — Abbé Maury marshal, and Marshal Lefebvre cardinal. — The country supper. — Gayety and privation. — Awakening of the curate, and generosity of the Emperor. — General readiness to furnish information. — The brave Wolff and the cross of honor. — Several generals wounded. — Skill of General Drouot. — Defense of the Russians. — M. de Rumigny at headquarters, and news of the Congress. — A secret conference most unfavorable to peace. — Very animated scene between the Emperor and the Duke of Vicenza. — Courageous persistence of the minister, and advice to make peace. — *You are Russian.* — The Emperor's vehemence. — A victory in prospect. — Tears of the Duke of Vicenza. — The march towards Laon. — The French army surprised by the Russians. — The Emperor's dissatisfaction. — Rheims is taken by M. de Saint-Priest. — Valor of General Corbineau. — Our entry into Rheims as the Russians leave. — Resignation of the inhabitants. — Good discipline of the Russians. — Three days at Rheims. — Young conscripts. — Six thousand men and General Janssens. — The affairs of the Empire. — The only perfectly indefatigable man.**

AFTER the brilliant successes obtained by the Emperor in such a short time, and with forces so exceedingly inferior to the great masses of the enemy, his Majesty, realizing the necessity of allowing his troops to take a rest of some days at Troyes, entered into negotiations for an armistice with the Prince von Schwarzenberg.

At this juncture it was announced to the Emperor that General Blücher, who had been wounded at Méry, was descending along both banks of the Maine, at the head of an army of fresh troops, estimated at not less than one

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hundred thousand men, and that he was marching on Meaux. The Prince von Schwarzenberg, having been informed of this movement of Blücher's, immediately cut short the negotiations, and assumed the offensive at Bar-sur-Seine. The Emperor, whose genius followed by a single glance all the marches and operations of the enemy, though he could not be everywhere at once, resolved to confront Blücher in person, while by means of a stratagem he made it appear that he was present opposite Schwarzenberg; and two army corps, commanded, one by Marshal Oudinot, the other by Marshal Macdonald, were then sent to meet the Austrians. As soon as the troops approached the enemy's camp they made the air resound with the shouts of confidence and cheers with which they usually announced the presence of his Majesty, though at this very moment he was repairing in all haste to meet General Blücher.

We halted at the little village of Herbisse, where we passed the night in the manse; and the curate, seeing the Emperor arrive with his marshals, *aides-de-camp*, ordnance officers, service of honor, and the other services, almost lost his wits. His Majesty on alighting said to him, "Monsieur le Curé, we come to ask your hospitality for a night. Do not be frightened by this visit; we shall disturb you as little as possible." The Emperor, conducted by the good curate, beside himself with eagerness and embarrassment, established himself in the only apartment the house contained, which served at the same time as kitchen, dining-room, bedroom, cabinet, and reception-room. In an instant his Majesty had his maps and papers spread out before him, and prepared himself for work with as much ease as in his cabinet at the Tuileries. But the persons of his suite

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needed somewhat more time to install themselves, for it was no easy thing for so many persons to find a place in a bakehouse which, with the room occupied by his Majesty, composed the entire manse of Herbisse; but these gentlemen, although there were among them more than one dignitary and prince of the Empire, were uncomplaining, and readily disposed to accommodate themselves to circumstances. The gay good humor of these gallant soldiers, in spite of all the combats they had to sustain each day, while events every instant took a more alarming turn, was most noteworthy, and depicts well the French character.

The youngest officers formed a circle around the curate's niece, who sang to them the songs of the country. The good curate, in the midst of continual comings and goings, and the efforts he made to play worthily his *rôle* of master of the mansion, found himself attacked on his own territory, that is to say, on his breviary, by Marshal Lefebvre, who had studied in his youth to be a priest, and said that he *had preserved nothing from his first vocation except the shaven head, because it was so easy to comb.* The worthy marshal intermingled his Latin quotations with those military expressions he so freely used, causing those present to indulge in bursts of laughter, in which even the curate himself joined, and said, "Monseigneur, if you had continued your studies for the priesthood you would have become a cardinal at least." — "Very likely," observed one of the officers; "and if the Abbé Maury had been a sergeant-major in '89, he might to-day be marshal of France." — "Or dead," added the Duke of Dantzic, using a much more energetic expression; "and so much the better for him, since in that case he would not see the Cossacks twenty

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leagues from Paris." — "Oh, bah! Monseigneur, we will drive them away," said the same officer. "Yes," the marshal muttered between his clinched teeth; "we shall see what we shall see."

At this moment the mule arrived bearing the sutler's supplies, which had been long and impatiently expected. There was no table; but one was made of a door placed on casks, and seats were improvised with planks. The chief officers seated themselves, and the others ate standing. The curate took his place at this military table on which he had himself placed his best bottles of wine, and with his native *bonhomie* continued to entertain the guests. At length the conversation turned on Herbisse and its surroundings, and the host was overcome with astonishment on finding that his guests knew the country so thoroughly.

"Ah, I have it!" exclaimed he, considering them attentively one after the other; "you are Champenois!" And in order to complete his surprise these gentlemen drew from their pockets plans on which they made him read the names of the very smallest localities. Then his astonishment only changed its object, for he had never dreamed that military science required such exact study. "What labor!" replied the good curate, "what pains! and all this in order the better to shoot cannon-balls at each other!" The supper over, the next thought was the arrangements for sleeping; and for this purpose we found in the neighboring barns a shelter and some straw. There remained outside, and near the door of the room occupied by the Emperor, only the officers on duty, Roustan and myself, each of whom had a bundle of straw for his bed. Our worthy host, having given up his bed to his Majesty, remained with us, and rested like us

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from the fatigues of the day, and was still sleeping soundly when the staff left the manse; for the Emperor arose, and set off at break of day. The curate when he awoke expressed the deepest chagrin that he had not been able to make his adieux to his Majesty. A purse was handed him containing the sum the Emperor was accustomed to leave private individuals of limited means at whose residences he halted as indemnity for their expense and trouble; and we resumed our march in the steps of the Emperor, who hastened to meet the Prussians.

The Emperor wished to reach Soissons before the allies; but although they had been obliged to traverse roads which were practically impassable, they had arrived before our troops, and as he entered La Ferté his Majesty saw them retiring to Soissons. The Emperor was rejoiced at this sight. Soissons was defended by a formidable garrison, and could delay the enemy, while Marshals Marmont and Mortier and his Majesty in person attacked Blücher in the rear and on both flanks, and would have inclosed him as in a net. But this time again the enemy escaped from the snare the Emperor had laid for him at the very moment he thought he had seized him, for Blücher had hardly presented himself in front of Soissons before the gates were opened. General Moreau, commandant of the place, had already surrendered the town to Bülow, and thus assured to the allies the passage of the Aisne. On receiving this depressing news the Emperor exclaimed, "The name of Moreau has always been fatal to me!"

Meanwhile his Majesty, continuing his pursuit of the Prussians, was occupied in delaying the passage of the Aisne. On the 5th of March he sent General Nansouty

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in advance, who with his cavalry took the bridge, drove the enemy back as far as Corbeny, and made a Russian colonel prisoner. After passing the night at Béry-au-Bac, the Emperor was marching towards Laon when it was announced to him that the enemy was coming to meet us; these were not Prussians, but an army corps of Russians commanded by Sacken.[1] On advancing farther, we found the Russians established on the heights of Craonne, and covering the road to Laon in what appeared to be an impregnable position; but nevertheless the advance guard of our army, commanded by Marshal Ney, rushed forward and succeeded in taking Craonne. That was enough glory for this time, and both sides then passed the night preparing for the battle of next day. The Emperor spent it at the village of Corbeny, but without sleeping, as inhabitants of the neighboring villages arrived at all hours to give information as to the position of the enemy and the geography of the country. His Majesty questioned them himself, praised them or recompensed their zeal, and profited by their information and services. Thus, having recognized in the mayor of one of the communes in the suburbs of Craonne one of his former comrades in the regiment of La Fère, he placed him in the number of his *aides-de-camp*, and arranged that he should serve as guide through this country, which no one knew better than he. M. de Bussy (that was the officer's name) had left France during the reign of terror, and on his return had not re-entered the army, but lived in retirement on his estates.

[1] Fabian Wilhelm, Prince von Osten-Sacken, born in Livonia, 1752; served under Suwarrow against Poles and Turks, and commanded a corps, 1812-1815; field-marshal, 1826; died 1837. — TRANS.

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The Emperor met again this same night one of his old companions in arms in the regiment of La Fère, an Alsatian named Wolff, who had been a sergeant of artillery in the regiment in which the Emperor and M. de Bussy had been his superior officers. He came from Strasburg, and testified to the good disposition of the inhabitants through the whole extent of the country he had traversed. The dismay caused in the allied armies by the first attacks of the Emperor made itself felt even to the frontiers; and on each road the peasants rose, armed themselves, and cut off the retreat, and killed many of the enemy. Corps of the Emperor's adherents were formed in the Vosges, with officers of well-proved bravery at their head, who were accustomed to this species of warfare. The garrisons of the cities and fortified places of the east were full of courage and resolution; and it would have well suited the wishes of the population of this part of the Empire had France become, according to the wish expressed by the Emperor, the tomb of the foreign armies. The brave Wolff, after having given this information to the Emperor, repeated it before many other persons, myself among the number. He took only a few hours' repose, and set out again immediately; but the Emperor did not dismiss him until he had been decorated with the cross of honor, as the reward of his devotion.

The battle of Craonne commenced, or I should say recommenced, on the 7th at break of day, the infantry commanded by the Prince of Moskwa[1] and the Duke of Belluno,[2] who was wounded on this day. Generals Grouchy and Nansouty, the first commanding the cavalry

[1] Marshal Ney. [2] Marshal Victor. — TRANS.

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of the army, the second at the head of the cavalry of the guard, also received severe wounds. The difficulty was not so much to take the heights, as to hold them when taken. Meanwhile the French artillery, directed by the modest and skillful General Drouot, forced the enemy's artillery to yield their ground foot by foot. This was a terribly bloody struggle; for the sides of the heights were too steep to allow of attacking the Russians on the flank, and the retreat was consequently slow and murderous. They fell back at length, however, and abandoned the field of battle to our troops, who pursued them as far as the inn of the Guardian Angel, situated on the highroad from Soissons to Laon, when they wheeled about, and held their position in this spot for several hours.

The Emperor, who in this battle as in every other of this campaign, had exposed his person and incurred as many dangers as the most daring soldiers, now transferred his headquarters to the village of Bray. As soon as he entered the room which served as his cabinet, he had me summoned, and I pulled off his boots, while he leaned on my shoulder without uttering a word, threw his hat and sword on the table, and threw himself on his bed, uttering a deep sigh, or rather one of those exclamations which we cannot tell whether they arise from discouragement or simply from fatigue. His Majesty's countenance was sad and careworn, nevertheless he slept from sheer weariness for many hours. I awoke him to announce the arrival of M. de Rumigny, who was the bearer of dispatches from Châtillon. In the condition of the Emperor's mind at this moment he seemed ready to accept any reasonable conditions which might be offered him; therefore I admit I hoped (in which many

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joined me) that we were approaching the moment when we should obtain the peace which we so ardently desired. The Emperor received M. de Rumigny without witnesses, and the interview lasted a long while. Nothing transpired of what had been said, and it occurred to me that this mystery argued nothing good. The next day early M. de Rumigny returned to Châtillon, where the Duke of Vicenza awaited him; and from the few words his Majesty uttered as he mounted his horse to return to his advance posts, it was easy to see that he had not yet resigned himself to the idea of making a peace which he regarded as dishonorable.

While the Duke of Vicenza was at Châtillon or Lusigny for the purpose of treating for a peace, the orders of the Emperor delayed or hastened the conclusion of the treaty according to his successes or repulses. On the appearance of a ray of hope he demanded more than they were willing to grant, imitating in this respect the example which the allied sovereigns had set him, whose requirements since the armistice of Dresden increased in proportion as they advanced towards France. At last everything was finally broken off, and the Duke of Vicenza rejoined his Majesty at Saint-Dizier. I was in a small room so near his sleeping-room that I could not avoid hearing their conversation. The Duke of Vicenza earnestly besought the Emperor to accede to the proposed conditions, saying that they were reasonable now, but later would no longer be so. As the Duke of Vicenza still returned to the charge, arguing against the Emperor's postponing his positive decision, his Majesty burst out vehemently, "You are a Russian, Caulaincourt!" — "No, Sire," replied the duke with spirit,

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"no; I am a Frenchman! I think that I have proved this by urging your Majesty to make peace."

The discussion thus continued with much warmth in terms which unfortunately I cannot recall. But I remember well that every time the Duke of Vicenza insisted and endeavored to make his Majesty appreciate the reasons on account of which peace had become indispensable, the Emperor replied, "If I gain a battle, as I am sure of doing, I will be in a situation to exact the most favorable conditions. The grave of the Russians is under the walls of Paris! My measures are all taken, and victory cannot fail."

After this conversation, which lasted more than an hour, and in which the Duke of Vicenza was entirely unsuccessful, he left his Majesty's room, and rapidly crossed the saloon where I was; and I remarked as he passed that his countenance showed marks of agitation, and that, overcome by his deep emotion, great tears rolled from his eyes. Doubtless he was deeply wounded by what the Emperor had said to him of his partiality for Russia; and whatever may have been the cause, from that day I never saw the Duke of Vicenza except at Fontainebleau.

The Emperor, meanwhile, marched with the advance guard, and wished to reach Laon on the evening of the 8th; but in order to gain this town it was necessary to pass on a narrow causeway through marshy land. The enemy was in possession of this road, and opposed our passage. After a few cannon-shots were exchanged his Majesty deferred till next day the attempt to force a passage, and returned, not to sleep (for at this critical time he rarely slept), but to pass the night in the village of Chavignon.

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In the middle of this night General Flahaut[1] came to announce to the Emperor that the commissioners of the allied powers had broken the conferences at Lusigny. The army was not informed of this, although the news would probably have surprised no one. Before daylight General Gourgaud set out at the head of a detachment selected from the bravest soldiers of the army, and following a cross road which turned to the left through the marshes, fell unexpectedly on the enemy, slew many of them in the darkness, and drew the attention and efforts of the allied generals upon himself, while Marshal Ney, still at the head of the advance guard, profited by this bold maneuver to force a passage of the causeway. The whole army hastened to follow this movement, and on the evening of the 9th was in sight of Laon, and ranged in line of battle before the enemy who occupied the town and its heights. The army corps of the Duke of Ragusa had arrived by another road, and also formed in line of battle before the Russian and Prussian armies. His Majesty passed the night expediting his orders, and preparing everything for the grand attack which was to take place next morning at daylight.

The appointed hour having arrived, I had just finished in haste the toilet of the Emperor, which was very short, and he had already put his foot in the stirrup, when we saw running towards us on foot, with the utmost speed and all out of breath, some cavalrymen belonging to the army

[1] Count Auguste Charles Joseph Flahaut de la Billarderie, born in Paris, 1785; colonel in 1809; *aide-de-camp* to the Emperor, 1812; and made a general of division for conduct at Leipzig; was at Waterloo. Ambassador to Vienna, 1841–1848, and senator, 185?; died 1870. He was one of the lovers of Queen Hortense, and father by her of the late Duc de Morny.—TRANS.

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corps of the Duke of Ragusa. His Majesty had them brought before him, and inquired angrily the meaning of this disorder. They replied that their bivouacs had been attacked unexpectedly by the enemy; that they and their comrades had resisted to the utmost these overwhelming forces, although they had barely time to seize their arms; that they had at last been compelled to yield to numbers, and it was only by a miracle they had escaped the massacre. "Yes," said the Emperor knitting his brow, "by a miracle of agility, as we have just seen. What has become of the marshal?" One of the soldiers replied that he saw the Duke of Ragusa fall dead, another that he had been taken prisoner. His Majesty sent his *aide-de-camp* and orderly officers to ascertain, and found that the report of the cavalrymen was only too true. The enemy had not waited to be attacked, but had fallen on the army corps of the Duke of Ragusa, surrounded it, and taken a part of his artillery. The marshal, however, had been neither wounded nor taken prisoner, but was on the road to Rheims, endeavoring to arrest and bring back the remains of his army corps.

The news of this disaster greatly increased his Majesty's chagrin; but nevertheless the enemy was driven back to the gates of Laon, though the recapture of the city was impossible. After a few fruitless attempts, or rather after some false attacks, the object of which was to conceal his retreat from the enemy, the Emperor returned to Chavignon and passed the night. The next day, the 11th, we left this village, and the army fell back to Soissons. His Majesty alighted at the bishopric, and immediately commanded Marshal Mortier, together with the principal officials of the place, to take measures to put the town in a state of de-

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fense. For two days the Emperor shut himself up at work in his cabinet, and left it only to examine the locality, visit the fortifications, and everywhere give orders and see that they were executed. In the midst of these preparations for defense, his Majesty learned that the town of Rheims had been taken by the Russian general, Saint-Priest,[1] notwithstanding the vigorous resistance of General Corbineau,[2] of whose fate we were ignorant, but it was believed that he was dead or had fallen into the hands of the Russians. His Majesty confided the defense of Soissons to the Marshal Duke of Treviso, and himself set out for Rheims by forced marches; and we arrived the same evening at the gates of the city, where the Russians were not expecting his Majesty. Our soldiers entered this battle without having taken any repose, but fought with the resolution which the presence and example of the Emperor never failed to inspire. The combat lasted the whole evening, and was prolonged far into the night; but after General Saint-Priest had been grievously wounded the resistance of his troops became less vigorous, and at two o'clock in the morning they abandoned the town. The Emperor and his army entered by one gate while the Russians were emerging from the other; and as the inhabitants pressed in crowds around his Majesty, he inquired before alighting from his horse what havoc the enemy was supposed to have made. It was answered that

[1] Count Guillaume Emmanuel de Saint-Priest was born at Constantinople (where his father was French minister), 1776. Having entered the Russian service, he fought against France at Austerlitz and in other engagements, attaining the rank of general; he was killed at Rheims, 1814. — TRANS.

[2] John Baptist Corbineau, born at Marchiennes, 1776; in Russian campaign *aide-de-camp* to the Emperor, and general of division, 1813. He is said to have saved the Emperor's life at Montmirail, 1814. He directed the arrest of Louis Napoleon at Boulogne, 1840; died 1848. — TRANS.

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the town had suffered only the amount of injury which was the inevitable result of a bloody nocturnal struggle, and that moreover the enemy had maintained severe discipline among the troops during their stay and up to the moment of retreat. Among those who pressed around his Majesty at this moment was the brave General Corbineau. He wore a citizen's coat, and had remained disguised and concealed in a private house of the town. On the morning of the next day he again presented himself before the Emperor, who welcomed him cordially, and complimented him on the courage he had displayed under such trying circumstances. The Duke of Ragusa had rejoined his Majesty under the walls of Rheims, and had contributed with his army corps to the capture of the town. When he appeared before the Emperor, the latter burst out in harsh and severe reproaches regarding the affair at Laon; but his anger was not of long duration, and his Majesty soon resumed towards the marshal the tone of friendship with which he habitually honored him. They held a long conference, and the Duke of Ragusa remained to dine with the Emperor.

His Majesty spent three days at Rheims in order to give his troops time to rest and recuperate before continuing this arduous campaign. They were in sore need of this; for even old soldiers would have had great difficulty in enduring such continued forced marches, which often ended only in a bloody battle; nevertheless, the greater part of the brave men who obeyed with such unwearied ardor the Emperor's orders, and who never refused to endure any fatigue or any danger, were conscripts who had been levied in haste, and fought against the most warlike and best disciplined troops in Europe. The greater part had not had

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even sufficient time to learn the drill, and took their first lessons in the presence of the enemy, brave young fellows who sacrificed themselves without a murmur, and to whom the Emperor once only did injustice, — in the circumstance which I have formerly related, and in which M. Larrey played such a heroic part. It is a well-known fact that the wonderful campaign of 1814 was made almost entirely with conscripts newly levied.

During the halt of three days which we made at Rheims, the Emperor saw with intense joy, which he openly manifested, the arrival of an army corps of six thousand men, whom the brave Dutch General Janssens[1] brought to his aid. This re-enforcement of experienced troops could not have come more opportunely. While our soldiers were taking breath before recommencing a desperate struggle, his Majesty was giving himself up to the most varied labors with his accustomed ardor. In the midst of the cares and dangers of war the Emperor neglected none of the affairs of the Empire, but worked for several hours each day with the Duke of Bassano, received couriers from Paris, dictated his replies, and fatigued his secretaries almost as much as his generals and soldiers. As for himself, he was indefatigable as of yore.

[1] Jan Willem Janssens, born at Nymwegen, 1762; governor of Colony of Cape of Good Hope, 1802, till driven out by English in 1806; governor-general of Dutch East Indies, and captured by English in Batavia, 1811; died 1835. — TRANS.

KIRLOSKER SANGIT THEATRE
किर्लोस्कर
संगीत नाटकगृह,
पुणे.
POONA

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## CHAPTER XXV.

An habitual expression of the Emperor. — New plan of attack. — Departure for Rheims. — Secret mission to King Joseph. — Precautions taken by the Emperor in regard to the Empress and the King of Rome. — Conversation of the evening before. — The Emperor Alexander and the King of Prussia arrive at Troyes. — Admirable conduct at Épernay. — M. Moët and the cross of honor. — Another cross given to a farmer. — Retreat of the allied army. — Engagement of La Fère. — Champenoise. — Count d'Artois at Nancy. — On the 20th of March the battle of Arcis-sur-Aube. — The Prince von Schwarzenberg brings up the Austrians. — Dissolution of the Congress and presence of the Austrian army. — Nocturnal battle. — Flames lighting the battlefield. — Retreat in good order. — The Emperor's presence of mind, and assistance rendered the Sisters of Charity. — The name of the Bourbons pronounced for the first time by the Emperor. — Memory of the Empress Josephine. — The enemies at Épernay. — Pillage and the horror it inspired in his Majesty. — The Emperor at Saint-Dizier. — M. de Weissemberg at headquarters. — Verbal message to the Emperor of Austria. — The Emperor of Austria compelled to retire to Dijon. — Arrival at Doulevent, and secret opinion of M. de Lavalette. — News from Paris. — The national guard and the schools. — The *Oriflamme* at the opera. — Rapid flight of time. — Battle continuously waged. — Saint-Dizier is captured. — Junction of General Blücher and the Prince von Schwarzenberg. — News of King Joseph. — Will Paris be able to defend itself? — Mission of General Dejean. — The Emperor leaves for Paris. — I am separated from his Majesty for the first time.

AFFAIRS had reached a point where the great question of triumph or defeat could not long remain undecided. According to one of the habitual expressions of the Emperor, *the pear was ripe;* but who was to gather it? The Emperor while at Rheims appeared to have no doubt that the result would be in his favor. By one of those bold combinations which astonish the world, and change in a single battle the face of affairs, although the enemy had

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From a Painting by C. Steuben

NAPOLEON AT WATERLOO

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approached the capital, his Majesty being unable to prevent it, he nevertheless resolved to attack them in the rear, compel them to wheel about, and place themselves in opposition to the army which he commanded in person, and thus save Paris from their invasion. With the intention of executing this bold combination the Emperor left Rheims. Meanwhile, being anxious concerning his wife and son, the Emperor, before attempting this great enterprise, wrote in the greatest secrecy to his brother, Prince Joseph, lieutenant-general of the Empire, to have them conveyed to a place of safety in case the danger became imminent. I knew nothing of this order the day it was sent, as the Emperor kept it a secret from every one; but when I learned afterwards that it was from Rheims that this command had been addressed to Prince Joseph, I thought that I could without fear of being mistaken fix the date at March 15th. That evening, in fact, his Majesty had talked to me as he retired of the Empress and the King of Rome; and as usual, whenever he had during the day been deeply impressed with any idea, it always recurred to him in the evening; and for that reason I conclude that this was the day on which his mind had been occupied with putting in a place of shelter from the dangers of the war the two objects of his most devoted affection.

From Rheims we directed our course to Épernay, the garrison and inhabitants of which had just repulsed the enemy, who the evening before had attempted to capture it. There the Emperor learned of the arrival at Troyes of the Emperor Alexander and the King of Prussia. His Majesty, in order to testify to the inhabitants of Épernay his satisfaction with their admirable conduct, rewarded

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them in the person of their mayor by giving him the cross of the Legion of Honor. This was M. Moët, whose reputation has become almost as European as that of Champagne wine.

During this campaign, without being too lavish of the cross of honor, his Majesty presented it on several occasions to those of the inhabitants who were foremost in resisting the enemy. Thus, for example, I remember that before leaving Rheims he gave one to a simple farmer of the village of Selles whose name I have forgotten. This brave man, on learning that a detachment of Prussians was approaching his commune, put himself at the head of the National Guard, whom he encouraged both by word and example; and the result of his enterprise was forty-five prisoners, among them three officers, whom he brought into the town.

How many deeds similar to this occurred which it is impossible to remember! However all that may be, the Emperor on leaving Épernay marched towards Fère-Champenoise, I will not say *in all haste*, for that is a term which might be used concerning all his Majesty's movements, who sprang with the rapidity of an eagle on the point where his presence seemed most necessary. Nevertheless, the enemy's army, which had crossed the Seine at Pont and Nogent, having learned of the re-occupation of Rheims by the Emperor, and understanding the movement he wished to make on their rear, began their retreat on the 17th, and retook successively the bridges which he had constructed at Pont, Nogent, and Arcis-sur-Aube. On the 18th occurred the battle of Fère-Champenoise, which his Majesty fought to clear the road intervening between him and Arcis-sur-Aube,

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where were the Emperor Alexander and the King of Prussia, who, on learning of this new success of the Emperor, quickly fell back to Troyes. The pronounced intention of his Majesty was then to go as far as Bar-sur-Aube. We had already passed the Aube at Plancy, and the Seine at Méry, but it was necessary to return to Plancy. This was on the 19th, the same day on which the Count d'Artois arrived at Nancy, and on which the rupture of the Congress of Châtillon occurred, which I mentioned in the preceding chapter, following the order in which my souvenirs recurred to my mind.

The 20th March was, as I have said, an eventful date in the Emperor's life, and was to become still more so one year later. The 20th March, 1814, the King of Rome completed his third year, while the Emperor was exposing himself, if it were possible, even more than was his usual custom. At the battle of Arcis-sur-Aube, which took place on that day, his Majesty saw that at last he would have new enemies to encounter. The Austrians themselves entered the line of battle; and an immense army, under the command of the Prince von Schwarzenberg, spread itself out before him, when he supposed he had only an advance guard to resist. The coincidence may not perhaps appear unimportant that the Austrian army did not begin to fight seriously or attack the Emperor in person until the day after the rupture of the Congress of Châtillon. Was this the result of chance, or did the Emperor of Austria indeed prefer to remain in the second line, and spare the person of his son-in-law, so long as peace appeared possible to him? This is a question which it is not my province to answer.

The battle of Arcis-sur-Aube was terrible, and ended

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only with the close of day. The Emperor still occupied the city in spite of the combined efforts of an army of one hundred and thirty thousand fresh troops, who attacked thirty thousand worn out by fatigue. The battle still continued during the night, while the fire of the faubourgs lighted our defenses and the works of the besieging-party. It was at last found impossible to hold our position longer, and only one bridge remained by which the army could effect its retreat. The Emperor had another constructed; and the retreat commenced, but in good order, in spite of the numerous masses which closely threatened us. This unfortunate affair was the most disastrous his Majesty had experienced during the whole campaign, since the roads leading to the capital had been left uncovered; and the prodigies of his genius and valor were unavailing against such overwhelming numbers. An instance which furnishes an excellent proof of the presence of mind which the Emperor preserved in the most critical positions was, that before evacuating Arcis he committed to the Sisters of Charity a sum sufficient for the first needs of the wounded.

On the evening of the 21st we arrived at Sommepuis, where the Emperor passed the night. There I heard him for the first time pronounce the name of the Bourbons. His Majesty was extremely agitated, and spoke in such broken tones that I understood only these words, which he repeated many times: "Recall them myself — recall the Bourbons! What would the enemy say? No, no! it is impossible! Never!" These words which escaped the Emperor in one of those attacks of preoccupation to which he was subject whenever his soul was deeply moved astonished me inexpressibly; for the idea had never once en-

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tered my mind that there could be any other government in France than that of his Majesty. Besides, it may be easily understood that in the position I then occupied I had scarcely heard the Bourbons mentioned, except to the Empress Josephine in the early days of the Consulate, while I was still in her service.

The various divisions of the French army and the masses of the enemy were then so closely pressed against each other, that the enemy occupied each point the moment we were compelled to abandon it; thus, on the 22d the allies seized Épernay, and, in order to punish this faithful town for the heroic defense it had previously made, orders were given that it should be pillaged. Pillage! The Emperor called it the *crime of war;* and I heard him often express in most vehement terms the horror with which it inspired him, which was so extreme that at no time did he authorize it during his long series of triumphs. Pillage! And yet every proclamation of our devastators declared boldly that they made war only on the Emperor; they had the audacity to repeat this statement, and some were foolish enough to believe them. On this point I saw too plainly what actually occurred to have ever believed in the ideal magnanimity which has since been so much vaunted.

On the 23d we were at Saint-Dizier, where the Emperor returned to his first plan of attacking the enemy's rear. The next day, just as his Majesty mounted his horse to go to Doulevent, a general officer of the Austrians was brought to him, whose arrival caused a great sensation at headquarters, as it delayed the Emperor's departure for a few moments. I soon learned that it was Baron de Weis-

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semberg, ambassador from Austria to London, who was returning from England. The Emperor ordered that he should follow him to Doulevent, where his Majesty gave him a verbal message to the Emperor of Austria, while Colonel Galbois was charged with a letter which the Emperor had the Duke of Vicenza write. But after a movement by the French army towards Chaumont, by the road of Langres, the Emperor of Austria, finding himself separated from the Emperor Alexander, was forced to fall back as far as Dijon. I remember that on his arrival at Doulevent his Majesty received secret information from his faithful director-general of the post, M. de Lavalette. This information, the purport of which I did not know, appeared to produce the deepest impression on the Emperor; but he soon resumed before the eyes of those around his accustomed serenity, though for some time past I had seen that this was only assumed. I have learned since that M. de Lavalette informed the Emperor that there was not a moment to lose if he would save the capital. Such an opinion from such a man could only be an expression of the real truth, and it was this conviction which contributed to increase the Emperor's anxiety. Until then the news from Paris had been favorable; and much had been said of the zeal and devotion of the National Guard, which nothing could dismay. At the various theaters patriotic pieces had been played, and notably the *Oriflamme*[1] at the Opera, a very trivial circumstance apparently, but which nevertheless acted very powerfully on the minds of enthusiasts,

[1] It singularly happened that this opera of the *Oriflamme* was the subject of Geoffroy's last critique, for this celebrated critic died a few days later; and if he did not thus secure the repose of his own soul, he at least added to that of the actors. — CONSTANT.

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and for this reason was not to be disdained. Indeed, the small amount of news that we had received represented Paris as entirely devoted to his Majesty, and ready to defend itself against any attacks. And in fact, this news was not untrue; and the handsome conduct of the National Guard under the orders of Marshal Moncey, the enthusiasm of the different schools, and the bravery of the pupils of the polytechnic schools, soon furnished proof of this. But events were stronger than men. Meanwhile, time passed on, and we were approaching the fatal conclusion; each day, each moment, saw those immense masses collecting from the extremities of Europe, inclosing Paris, and pressing it with a thousand arms, and during these last days it might well be said that the battle raged incessantly. On the 26th the Emperor, led by the noise of a fierce cannonade, again repaired to Saint-Dizier, where his rear-guard was attacked by very superior forces, and compelled to evacuate the town; but General Milhaud and General Sebastiani repulsed the enemy on the Marne at the ford of Valcourt; the presence of the Emperor produced its accustomed effect, and we re-entered Saint-Dizier, while the enemy fled in the greatest disorder over the road to Vitry-le-Français and that of Bar-sur-Ornain. The Emperor moved towards the latter town, thinking that he now had the Prince of Schwarzenberg in his power; but just as he arrived there learned that it was not the Austrian general-in-chief whom he had fought, but only one of his lieutenants, Count Witzingerode. Schwarzenberg had deceived him; on the 23d he had made a junction with General Blücher, and these two generals at the head of the coalition had rushed with their masses of soldiers upon the capital.

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However disastrous might be the news brought to headquarters, the Emperor wished to verify its truth in person, and on his return from Saint-Dizier made a detour to Vitry, in order to assure himself of the march of the allies on Paris; and all his doubts were dissipated by what he saw. Could Paris hold out long enough for him to crush the enemy against its walls? Thereafter this was his sole and engrossing thought. He immediately placed himself at the head of his army, and we marched on Paris by the road to Troyes. At Doulencourt he received a courier from King Joseph, who announced to him the march of the allies on Paris. That very moment he sent General Dejean [1] in haste to his brother to inform him of his speedy arrival. If he could defend himself for two days, only two days, the allied armies would enter Paris, only to find there a tomb. In what a state of anxiety the Emperor then was! He set out with his headquarters squadrons. I accompanied him, and left him for the first time at Troyes, on the morning of the 30th, as will be seen in the following chapter.

[1] There were two generals of this name, father and son. The father, Count John Francis Dejean, born at Castelnaudary, 1749, became in 1800 councillor of State, and minister of war 1802, and inspector-general of engineer in 1808. In 1814, created by the Bourbons a peer and governor of the Polytechnic, he served in 1815 as *aide-de-camp* to the Emperor. Died 1824. The son, Count Peter Francis Dejean (who is probably referred to above), born at Amiens, 1780, became general of division, 1814, and distinguished himself at Waterloo, 1815. Became subsequently a distinguished writer on entomology, and died 1845. — TRANS.

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## CHAPTER XXVI.

Sad memories. — The foreigners in Paris. — An order of the Emperor. — His Majesty's departure for Troyes. — Ten leagues in two hours. — The Emperor in a chaise. — I arrive at Essonne. — Orders to return to Fontainebleau. — His Majesty's arrival. — The Emperor's dejection. — Marshal Moncey at Fontainebleau. — Melancholy silence of the Emperor. — Continued preoccupation. — Only distraction of the Emperor caused by his soldiers. — The first review at Fontainebleau. — Paris! Paris! — Necessity of speaking of myself. — My house pillaged by the Cossacks. — A gift of fifty thousand francs. — The Emperor's dejection constantly increases. — Roustan is forbidden to give pistols to the Emperor. — The Emperor's exceeding kindness to me. — Gift of a hundred thousand francs. — His Majesty condescends to enter into my family affairs. — Inexpressible gratitude. — One hundred thousand francs hidden in the woods. — Denis, the boy of the wardrobe. — The origin of all my chagrin.

WHAT a time was this! How sad the period and events of which I have now to recall the sad memory! I have now arrived at the fatal day when the combined armies of Europe were to sully the soil of Paris, of that capital, free for so many years from the presence of the invader. What a blow to the Emperor! And what cruel expiation his great soul now made for his triumphant entries into Vienna and Berlin! It was, then, all in vain that he had displayed such incredible activity during the admirable campaign of France, in which his genius had displayed itself as brilliantly as during his Italian campaign. The first time I saw him on the day after a battle was at Marengo; and what a contrast his attitude of dejection presented when I saw him again on the 31st of March at Fontainebleau.

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Having accompanied his Majesty everywhere, I was near him at Troyes on the morning of the 30th of March.

The Emperor set out at ten o'clock, accompanied only by the grand marshal and the Duke of Vicenza. It was then known at headquarters that the allied troops were advancing on Paris; but we were far from suspecting that at the very moment of the Emperor's hurried departure the battle before Paris was being most bitterly waged. At least I had heard nothing to lead me to believe it. I received an order to move to Essonne, and, as means of transportation had become scarce and hard to obtain, did not arrive there until the morning of the 31st, and had been there only a short time when the courier brought me an order to repair to Fontainebleau, which I immediately did. It was then I learned that the Emperor had gone from Troyes to Montereau in two hours, having made the journey of ten leagues in that short space of time. I also learned that the Emperor and his small suite had been obliged to make use of a chaise on the road to Paris, between Essonne and Villejuif. He advanced as far as the Cour de France with the intention of marching on Paris; but there, verifying the news and the cruel certainty of the surrender of Paris, had sent to me the courier whom I mentioned above.

I had been at Fontainebleau only a short while when the Emperor arrived. His countenance was pale and harassed to a greater degree than I had ever seen it; and he who knew so well how to control all the emotions of his soul did not seem to attempt to conceal the dejection which was so manifest both in his attitude and in his countenance. It was evident how greatly he was suffering from all the disastrous events which had accumulated one after the other in

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terrible progression. The Emperor said nothing to any one, and closeted himself immediately in his cabinet, with the Dukes of Bassano and Vicenza and the Prince of Neuchâtel. These generals remained a long while with the Emperor, who afterwards received some general officers. His Majesty retired very late, and appeared to me entirely crushed. From time to time I heard stifled sighs escape from his breast, with which were mingled the name of Marmont, which I could not then understand, as I had heard nothing of the terms of the surrender, and knew that the Duke of Ragusa was a marshal to whom the Emperor seemed always deeply attached. I saw that evening, at Fontainebleau, Marshal Moncey, who the evening before had bravely commanded the national guard at the barricade of Clichy, and also the Duke of Dantzic.

A gloomy and silent sadness which is perfectly indescribable reigned at Fontainebleau during the two days which followed. Overcome by so many repeated blows, the Emperor seldom entered his cabinet, where he usually passed so many hours engaged in work. He was so absorbed in his conflicting thoughts, that often he did not notice the arrival of persons whom he had summoned, looked at them, so to speak, without seeing them, and sometimes remained nearly half an hour without addressing them; then, as if awaking from this state of stupefaction, asked them questions without seeming to hear the reply; and even the presence of the Duke of Bassano and the Duke of Vicenza, whom he summoned more frequently, did not interrupt this condition of preoccupation or lethargy, so to speak. The hours for meals were the same, and they were served as usual; but all took place amid complete silence, broken only

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by the necessary noise of the service. At the Emperor's toilet the same silence; not a word issued from his lips; and if in the morning I suggested to him one of the drinks that he usually took, he not only did not reply, but nothing in his countenance which I attentively observed could make me believe that he had heard me. This situation was terrible for all the persons attached to his Majesty.

Was the Emperor really so overwhelmed by his evil fortune? Was his genius as benumbed as his body? I must admit, in all candor, that seeing him so different from what he appeared after the disasters of Moscow, and even when I had left him at Troyes a few days before, I strongly believed it. But this was by no means the case; his soul was a prey to one fixed idea — that of taking the offensive and marching on Paris. And though, indeed, he remained overwhelmed with consternation in his intimate intercourse with his most faithful ministers and most skillful generals, he revived at sight of his soldiers, thinking, doubtless, that the one would suggest only prudent counsels while the others would never reply aught but in shouts of "*Vive l'Empereur!*" to the most daring orders he might give. For instance, on the 2d of April he momentarily, so to speak, shook off his dejection, and in the court of the palace held a review of his guard, who had just rejoined him at Fontainebleau. He addressed his soldiers in a firm voice, saying: —

"Soldiers! the enemy has stolen three marches on us, and has taken possession of Paris; we must drive them out. Unworthy Frenchmen, *emigrés* to whom we have extended pardon, have donned the white cockade, and gone over to our enemies. The cowards! They will reap the reward of this new treason. Let us swear to conquer or to die, and to have respect shown to this tricolored cockade, which for twenty-five years we have borne on the road to glory and honor.'

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The troops were roused to enthusiasm at the sound of their chief's voice, and shouted in unison, "Paris! Paris!" But the Emperor, nevertheless, resumed his former dejection on crossing the threshold of the palace, which arose no doubt from the fear, only too well founded, of seeing his desire to march on Paris thwarted by his lieutenants. It is only since, that reflecting on the events of that time, I am enabled to conjecture as to the struggles which passed in the soul of the Emperor; for then, as during my entire period of service, I would not have dared to think of going outside the limits of my ordinary duties and functions.

Meanwhile, the situation became more and more unfavorable to the wishes and plans of the Emperor. The Duke of Vicenza had been sent to Paris, where a provisional government had been formed under the presidency of the Prince of Benevento, without having succeeded in his mission to the Emperor Alexander; and each day his Majesty with deep grief witnessed the adhesion of the marshals and a large number of generals to the new government. He felt the Prince de Neuchâtel's desertion deeply; and I must say that, unaccustomed as we were to political combinations, we were overcome with astonishment.

Here I find that I am compelled to speak of myself, which I have done as little as possible in the course of these memoirs, and I think this is a justice which all my readers will do me; but what I have to say is too intimately connected with the last days I passed with the Emperor, and concerns my personal honor too nearly, for me to suppose that I can be reproached for so doing. I was, as may well be supposed, very anxious as to the fate of my

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family, of whom I had received no news for a long while; and, at the same time, the cruel disease from which I had long suffered had made frightful progress, owing to the fatigue of the last campaign. Nevertheless, the mental suffering to which I saw the Emperor a victim so entirely absorbed all my thoughts, that I took no precautions against the physical suffering which I endured; and I had not even thought of asking for a safeguard for the country-house I possessed in the environs of Fontainebleau. A free corps having seized it, had established themselves there, after having pillaged and destroyed everything, even the little flock of merino sheep which I owed to the kindness of the Empress Josephine. The Emperor, having been informed of it by others than myself, said to me one morning at his toilet, "Constant, I owe you indemnity." — "Sire?" — "Yes, my child, I know that your place has been pillaged, I know that you have incurred considerable losses in the Russian campaign; I have given an order that fifty thousand francs should be handed you to cover the whole." I thanked his Majesty, who more than indemnified me for my losses.

This occurred during the first days of our last stay at Fontainebleau. At the same period the Emperor's removal to the Island of Elba having been already discussed, the grand marshal of the palace asked me if I would follow his Majesty to this residence. God is my witness that I had no other wish than to consecrate all my life to the service of the Emperor; therefore I did not need a moment's reflection to reply that this could not be a matter of doubt; and I occupied myself almost immediately with preparations for the sojourn, which proved to be not a long one, but the

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duration of which no human intelligence could then have been able to foretell.

Meanwhile, in the retirement of his chamber, the Emperor became each day more sad and careworn; and when I saw him alone, which often occurred, for I tried to be near him as much as possible, I remarked the extreme agitation which the reading of the dispatches he received from Paris caused him; this agitation was many times so great that I noticed he had torn his leg with his nails until the blood flowed, without being aware of it. I then took the liberty of informing him of the fact as gently as possible, with the hope of putting an end to this intense preoccupation, which cut me to the heart. Several times also the Emperor asked Roustan for his pistols; fortunately I had taken the precaution, seeing his Majesty so unnerved, to recommend him not to give them to him, however much the Emperor might insist. I thought it my duty to give an account of all this to the Duke of Vicenza, who entirely approved of my conduct. One morning, I do not recall whether it was the 10th or 11th of April, but it was certainly on one of those days, the Emperor, who had said nothing to me in the morning, had me called during the day. I had hardly entered his room when he said to me, in a tone of most winning kindness, "My dear Constant, there is a hundred thousand francs waiting for you at Peyrache's; if your wife arrives before our departure, you will give them to her; if she should not, put them in the corner of your country-place, note the exact location of the spot, which you will send to her by some safe person. When one has served me well he should not be in want. Your wife will buy a farm, in which she will invest this

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money; she will live with your mother and sister, and you will not have the fear of leaving her in need." Ever more moved by the provident kindness of the Emperor, who thus deigned to consider the interests of my family affairs, than delighted with the great value of the present he had made me, I could hardly find words to express to him my gratitude; and such was, besides, my carelessness of the future, so far from me had been the thought that this great Empire could come to an end, that this was the first time I had really considered the embarrassed condition in which I would have left my family, if the Emperor had not thus generously provided for them. I had, in fact, no fortune, and possessed in all the world only my pillaged house, and the fifty thousand francs destined to repair it.

Under these circumstances, not knowing when I should see my wife again, I made arrangements to follow the advice his Majesty had been kind enough to give me; converted my hundred thousand francs into gold, which I put into five bags; and taking with me the wardrobe boy Denis, whose honesty was above suspicion, we followed the road through the forest to avoid being seen by any of the persons who occupied my house. We cautiously entered a little inclosure belonging to me, the gate of which could not be seen on account of the trees, although they were now without foliage; and with the aid of Denis I succeeded in burying my treasure, after taking an exact note of the place, and then returned to the palace, being certainly very far from foreseeing how much chagrin and tribulation those hundred thousand francs would cause me, as we shall see in the succeeding chapters.

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## CHAPTER XXVII.

Indulgence asked. — Our position at Fontainebleau. — Impossibility of believing that the Emperor can be dethroned. — Numerous petitions. — Effect produced on his Majesty by the journals. — The Duke of Bassano. — The Emperor more affected by renouncing the throne for his son than for himself. — The Emperor, a soldier, and one louis per day. — The Emperor's abdication. — Great revelation. — A sad day and a calm evening. — The Emperor's retiring. — Painful awaking. — The Emperor poisoned. — Remains of the campaign sachet. — Words addressed to me by the dying Emperor. — Frightful despair. — His Majesty's resignation. — Delay in dying. — First convulsion. — Order to summon M. Caulaincourt and M. Yvan. — Touching words of his Majesty to the Duke of Vicenza. — Long opposition to our united prayers. — The Emperor questions M. Yvan, and his sudden fright. — Second convulsion. — The Emperor at last taking medicine. — Drowsiness of the Emperor. — Awaking, and complete silence on the events of the night. — M. Yvan leaves for Paris. — Departure of Roustan. — The 12th of April. — Farewell of Marshal Macdonald to the Emperor. — Breakfast as usual. — The sword of Mourad-Bey. — The Emperor more talkative than usual. — Sudden variations in the Emperor's humor. — Morose sadness and *The Monaco*. — Repugnance of the Emperor to receiving letters from Paris. — Remarkable proof of the Emperor's dejection. — A beautiful lady at Fontainebleau. — A whole night of expectation and oblivion. — Another visit to Fontainebleau and a retrospection. — Adventure at Saint-Cloud. — The protector of beautiful women for his Majesty. — My journey to Bourg-la-Reine. — The mother and daughter. — Journey to the Island of Elba, and marriage. — Sad return to affairs at Fontainebleau. — A question the Emperor asks me. — Candid reply. — The Emperor's remarks concerning the Duke of Bassano.

HERE more than ever I must beg the indulgence of my readers as to the order in which I relate the events I witnessed during the Emperor's stay at Fontainebleau, and those connected with them which did not come to my knowledge until later. I must also apologize for any inac-

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curacy in dates of which I may be guilty, though I remember collectively, so to speak, all that occurred during the unhappy twenty days which ensued between the occupation of Paris and the departure of his Majesty for the Island of Elba; for I was so completely absorbed in the unhappy condition of my good master that all my faculties hardly sufficed for the sensations I experienced every moment. We suffered in the Emperor's sufferings; it occurred to none of us to imprint on his memory the recollection of so much agony, for we lived, so to speak, only provisionally.

During the first days of our stay at Fontainebleau the idea that the Emperor would soon cease to reign over France was very far from entering the minds of any of those around him, for every one was possessed with the conviction that the Emperor of Austria would not consent that his son-in-law, daughter, and grandson should be dethroned; in this they were strangely mistaken. I remarked during these first days that even more petitions than usual were addressed to his Majesty; but I am ignorant whether he responded favorably, or even if he replied at all. The Emperor often took up the daily papers, but after casting his eyes over them threw them down angrily; and if we recall the shameless abuse in which those writers indulged who had so often lavished fulsome praises on him, it may well be understood that such a transition would naturally excite his Majesty's disgust. The Emperor usually remained alone; and the person whom he saw most frequently was the Duke of Bassano, the only one of his ministers then at Fontainebleau; for the Duke of Vicenza, being charged continually with missions, was, so to speak, constantly on the wing, especially as long as his Majesty

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retained the hope of seeing a regency in favor of his son succeed him in the government. In seeking to recall the varied feelings whose impress I remarked on his Majesty's countenance, I think I may affirm that he was even more deeply affected by being compelled to renounce the throne for his son than in resigning it for himself. When the marshals or the Duke of Vicenza spoke to his Majesty of arrangements relating to his person, it was easy to see that he forced himself to listen to them only with the greatest repugnance. One day when they spoke of the Island of Elba, and I do not know what sum per year, I heard his Majesty reply vehemently: "That is too much, much too much for me. If I am no longer anything more than a common soldier, I do not need more than one louis per day."

Nevertheless, the time arrived when, pressed on every side, his Majesty submitted to sign the act of abdication pure and simple, which was demanded of him. This memorable act was conceived in these terms: —

"The allied powers having proclaimed that the Emperor Napoleon is the only obstacle to the re-establishment of peace in Europe, the Emperor Napoleon, faithful to his oath, declares that he renounces for himself and his heirs the thrones of France and Italy, and that there is no personal sacrifice, even his life, which he is not willing to make for the interests of France.

"Done at the palace of Fontainebleau, 11th of April, 1814.

"NAPOLEON."

I do not need to say that I then had no knowledge of the act of abdication above given; it was one of those state secrets which emanated from the cabinet, and hardly entered

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into the confidence of the bedroom. I only recall that there was some discussion of the matter, though very vague, that same day in the household; and, besides, it was evident that something extraordinary was taking place, and the whole day his Majesty seemed more depressed than at any previous time; but, nevertheless, I was far from anticipating the agony which followed this fatal day!

I beg the reader in advance to give earnest attention to the event which I shall now relate. I now become a historian, since I inscribe the painful remembrance of a striking act in the career of the Emperor; of an event which has been the subject of innumerable controversies, though it has been necessarily only a matter of surmise, since I alone knew all the painful details. I refer to the poisoning of the Emperor at Fontainebleau. I trust I do not need to protest my perfect truthfulness; I feel too keenly the great importance of such a revelation to allow myself to omit or add the least circumstance to the truth. I shall therefore relate events just as they occurred, just as I saw them, and as memory has engraved the painful details indelibly on my mind.

On the 11th of April I undressed the Emperor as usual, I think rather earlier than usual; for, if I remember aright, it was not quite half-past ten. As he retired he appeared to me better than during the day, and in nearly the same condition he had been on previous evenings. I slept in a room on the next floor, situated behind the Emperor's room, with which it communicated by a small, dark staircase. For some time past I had slept in my clothes, in order to attend the Emperor more promptly if he should call me; and I was sleeping soundly, when at midnight I was awaked

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by M. Pelard, who was on duty. He told me that the Emperor had asked for me, and on opening my eyes I saw on his face an expression of alarm which astounded me. I threw myself out of the bed, and rapidly descended the staircase, as M. Pelard added, "The Emperor has poured something in a glass and drunk it." I entered his Majesty's room, a prey to indescribable anxiety. The Emperor had lain down; but in advancing towards his bed I saw on the floor between the fireplace and the bed the little bag of black silk and skin, of which I spoke some time since. It was the same he had worn on his neck since the campaign in Spain, and which I had guarded so carefully from one campaign to another. Ah! if I had suspected what it contained. In this terrible moment the truth was suddenly revealed to me!

Meanwhile, I was at the head of the Emperor's bed. "Constant," said he, in a voice painfully weak and broken, "Constant, I am dying! I cannot endure the agony I suffer, above all the humiliation of seeing myself surrounded by foreign emissaries! My eagles have been trailed in the dust! I have not been understood! My poor Constant, they will regret me when I am no more! Marmont dealt me the finishing stroke. The wretch! I loved him!' Berthier's desertion has ruined me! My old friends, my old companions in arms!" The Emperor said to me many other things which I fear I might not repeat correctly; and it may well be understood that, overwhelmed as I was with despair, I did not attempt to engrave in my memory the words which at intervals escaped the Emperor's lips; for he did not speak continuously, and the complaints I have related were uttered only between

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intervals of repose, or rather of stupor. While my eyes were fastened on the Emperor's countenance, I noticed on it a sudden contraction, which was the premonition of a convulsion which frightened me terribly; fortunately this convulsion brought on a slight attack of vomiting, which gave me some hope. The Emperor, amidst his complicated physical and mental sufferings, maintained perfect self-possession, and said to me, after the first vomiting spell, "Constant, call M. Yvan and Caulaincourt." I half opened the door, and gave the order to M. Pelard, without leaving the Emperor's room, and returning to his bed, besought and entreated him to take a soothing potion; but all my efforts were in vain, so strong was his determination to die, even when in the presence of death.

In spite of the obstinate refusal of the Emperor, I was still entreating him when M. de Caulaincourt and M. Yvan entered the room. His Majesty made a sign to the Duke of Vicenza to approach his bed, and said to him, "Caulaincourt, I recommend to you my wife and child; serve them as you have served me. I have not long to live!" At this moment the Emperor was interrupted by another fit of vomiting, but slighter than the first, during which I tried to tell the duke that the Emperor had taken poison; he understood rather than heard me, for sobs stifled my voice to such an extent that I could not pronounce a word distinctly. M. Yvan drew near, and the Emperor said to him, "Do you believe the dose was strong enough?". These words were really an enigma to M. Yvan; for he was not aware of the existence of this sachet, at least not to my knowledge, and therefore answered, "I do not know what your Majesty means;" to which his Majesty made no reply.

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The Duke of Vicenza, M. Yvan, and I, having united our entreaties to the Emperor, were so fortunate at length as to induce him, though not without much difficulty, to drink a cup of tea, which he had refused when I had made it in much haste and presented it to him, saying, "Let me alone, Constant; let me alone." But, as a result of our redoubled efforts, he drank it at last, and the vomiting ceased. Soon after taking the tea the Emperor appeared calmer and fell asleep. These gentlemen quietly retired; and I remained alone in his room, where I awaited until he woke.

After a sleep of a few hours the Emperor awoke, seeming almost as usual, although his face still bore traces of what he had suffered, and while I assisted him in his morning toilet did not utter a word relating in the most indirect manner to the frightful night he had just passed. He breakfasted as usual, only a little later than ordinary. His appearance had resumed its usual calm, and he seemed more cheerful than for a long time past. Was it the result of his satisfaction at having escaped death, which a momentary despair had made him desire? Or did it not rather arise from the certainty of no longer fearing it in his bed more than on the battlefield? However that may be, I attribute the remarkable preservation of the Emperor's life to the fact that the poison contained in the bag had lost its efficacy.

When everything had returned to its usual order, without any one in the palace except those I have named suspecting what had occurred, I learned that M. Yvan had left Fontainebleau. Overwhelmed by the question the Emperor had addressed to him in the presence of the Duke

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of Vicenza, and fearing that he might suspect that he had given his Majesty the means of attempting his life, this skillful physician, so long and so faithfully attached to the Emperor's person, had, so to speak, lost his head in thinking of the responsibility resting on him. Hastily descending the stairs from the Emperor's apartments, and finding a horse ready saddled and bridled in one of the courts of the palace, he threw himself upon it, and hastily took the road to Paris. This was the morning of the same day that Roustan left Fontainebleau.

On the 12th of April, the Emperor also received the last adieux of Marshal Macdonald. When he was introduced, the Emperor was still feeling the effects of the events of the preceding night; and I am sure the Duke of Tarentum perceived, without divining the cause, that his Majesty was not in his usual condition. He was accompanied by the Duke of Vicenza; and at this moment the Emperor was still so much depressed, and seemed so entirely absorbed in thought, that he did not at first perceive these gentlemen, although he was perfectly wide awake. The Duke of Tarentum brought to the Emperor the treaty with the allies, and I left the room as he was preparing to sign it. A few moments after the Duke of Vicenza summoned me; and his Majesty said, "Constant, bring me the saber which Mourad-Bey presented to me in Egypt. You know which it is?" — "Yes, Sire." I went out, and immediately returned with this magnificent sword, which the Emperor had worn at the battle of Mount Tabor, as I have heard many times. I handed it to the Duke of Vicenza, from whose hands the Emperor took it, and presented it to Marshal Macdonald; and as I retired I

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heard the Emperor speaking to him most affectionately, and calling him his worthy friend.

These gentlemen, according to my recollection, were present at the Emperor's breakfast, where he appeared calmer and more cheerful than for a long time past; and we were all surprised to see him converse familiarly and in the most amiable manner with persons to whom for some time past he had usually addressed very brief and distant remarks. However, this gayety was only momentary; and, indeed, the manner in which the Emperor's mood varied from one moment to another during the whole time of our stay at Fontainebleau was perfectly indescribable. I have seen him on the same day plunged for several hours into the most terrible depression; then, a moment after, walking with great strides up and down his room, whistling or humming *La Monaco;* after which he suddenly fell into a kind of stupor, seeing nothing around him, and forgetting even the orders he had given. A fact which impressed me forcibly was the remarkable effect produced on him by letters addressed to him from Paris. As soon as he perceived them his agitation became extreme, — I might say convulsive, without fear of being taxed with exaggeration.

In support of what I have said of the incredible preoccupation of the Emperor, I will mention an occurrence which comes to my memory. During our sojourn at Fontainebleau the Countess Walewskà, of whom I have heretofore spoken, came, and having summoned me, told me how anxious she was to see the Emperor. Thinking that this would be sure to distract his Majesty, I mentioned it to him that very evening, and received orders to have her

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come at ten o'clock. Madame Walewska was, as may well be believed, promptly on hand at the appointed hour, and I entered the Emperor's room to announce her arrival. He was lying on his bed, and plunged so deeply in meditation that it was only on a second reminder from me he replied, "Ask her to wait." She then waited in the apartment in front of his Majesty's, and I remained to keep her company. Meanwhile the night passed on, and the hours seemed long to the beautiful visitor; and her distress that the Emperor did not summon her became so evident that I took pity on her, and re-entered the Emperor's room to remind him again. He was not asleep, but was so deeply absorbed in thought that he made no reply. At last day began to break; and the countess, fearing to be seen by the people of the household, withdrew in despair at not having bidden adieu to the object of her affections; and she had been gone more than an hour when the Emperor remembered that she was waiting, and asked for her. I told his Majesty how it was, and did not conceal the state of despair in which the countess [1] took her departure. The Emperor was much affected. "Poor woman, she thinks herself humiliated! Constant, I am really grieved. If you see her again, tell her so. But I have so many things there!" added he in a very energetic tone, striking his brow with his hand.

The visit of this lady to Fontainebleau recalls another of almost the same kind, but to describe which it is neces-

[1] I have learned since that the Countess de Walewska went with her son to visit the Emperor on the Island of Elba. This child resembled his Majesty so greatly that the report was started that the King of Rome had visited his father. Madame de Walewska remained only a short time at the Island of Elba. — CONSTANT.

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sary that I take up the thread of events a little further back.

A short time after his marriage with the Archduchess Marie Louise, although she was a young and beautiful woman, and although he really loved her devotedly, the Emperor was no more careful than in the time of the Empress Josephine to scrupulously observe conjugal fidelity. During one of our stays at Saint-Cloud he took a fancy to Madamoiselle L——, whose mother's second husband was a chief of squadron. These ladies then stayed at Bourg-la-Reine, where they were discovered by M. de ——, one of the most zealous protectors of the pretty women who were presented to his Majesty, and who spoke to him of this young person, then seventeen years old. She was a brunette of ordinary height, but with a beautiful figure, and pretty feet and hands, her whole person full of grace, and was indeed perfectly charming in all respects, and, besides, united with most enticing coquetry every accomplishment, danced with much grace, played on several instruments, and was full of intelligence; in fact, she had received that kind of showy education which forms the most charming mistresses and the worst wives. The Emperor told me one day, at eight o'clock in the evening, to seek her at her mother's, to bring her and return at eleven o'clock at latest. My visit caused no surprise; and I saw that these ladies had been forewarned, no doubt by their obliging patron, for they awaited me with an impatience they did not seek to conceal. The young person was dazzling with ornaments and beauty, and the mother radiant with joy at the idea of the honor destined for her daughter. I saw well that she imagined the Emperor could not fail to be

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captivated by so many charms, and that he would be seized with a great passion; but all this was only a dream, for the Emperor was amorous only when all things suited. However, we arrived at Saint-Cloud at eleven o'clock, and entered the château by the orangery, for fear of indiscreet eyes. As I had a pass-key to all the gates of the château, I conducted her into the Emperor's apartments without being seen by any one, where she remained about three hours. At the end of this time I escorted her to her home, taking the same precautions on leaving the château.

This young person, whom the Emperor had since seen three or four times at most, also came to Fontainebleau, accompanied by her mother; but, being unable to see his Majesty, this lady, like the Countess Walewska, determined to make the voyage to the Island of Elba, where it is said the Emperor married Mademoiselle L—— to a colonel of artillery.

What I have just written has carried me back almost unconsciously to happier times. It is necessary, however, to return to the sad stay at Fontainebleau; and, after what I have said of the dejection in which the Emperor lived, it is not surprising that, overwhelmed by such crushing blows, his mind was not disposed to gallantry. It seems to me I can still see the evidences of the gloomy melancholy which devoured him; and in the midst of so many sorrows the kindness of heart of the man seemed to increase in proportion to the sufferings of the dethroned sovereign. With what amenity he spoke to us in these last days! He then frequently deigned to question me as to what was said of recent events. With my usual artless candor I related to him exactly what I had heard; and I remember that one

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day, having told him I had heard many persons remark that the continuation of the last wars which had been so fatal to us was generally attributed to the Duke of Bassano, "They do poor Maret gross injustice," said he. "They accuse him wrongfully. He has never done anything but execute orders which I gave." Then, according to his usual habit, when he had spoken to me a moment of these serious affairs, he added, "What a shame! what humiliation! To think that I should have in my very palace itself a lot of foreign emissaries!"

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## CHAPTER XXVIII.

The grand marshal and General Drouot the only great personages remaining with the Emperor. — The destination of his Majesty known. — The commissioners of the allies. — Demand and repugnance of the Emperor. — Preference for the English commissioner. — Silent life in the palace. — The Emperor more calm. — Remark of his Majesty. — The eve of departure and day of despair. — Fatality attending the one hundred thousand francs which the Emperor had given me. — Unexpected and inexplicable question of the grand marshal. — What I should have done. — Inconceivable forgetfulness of the Emperor. — The hundred thousand francs disinterred. — Terror lest it should have been stolen. — Frightful despair. — Mistake as to the place, and the treasure found. — Prompt restitution. — Horror of the situation. — I leave the palace. — Mission of M. Hubert to me. — Offer of three hundred thousand francs to accompany the Emperor. — I am beside myself, and fear the accusation of acting from interest. — Painful reflections. — Incredible torture. — The Emperor sets out. — Astounding situation. — Physical and mental suffering. — Complete solitude of my life. — Visit of a friend. — False interpretation of my conduct in a journal. — M. de Turenne wrongly accused. — Impossibility of defending myself on account of my regard for his Majesty. — Consolation drawn from the past. — Examples and proofs of disinterestedness on my part. — Réfusal of four hundred thousand francs. — M. Marchand, by my efforts, gets a place under the Emperor. — M. Marchand's gratitude.

AFTER the 12th of April there remained with the Emperor, of all the great personages who usually surrounded him, only the grand marshal of the palace and Count Drouot. The destination reserved for the Emperor, and the fact that he had accepted it, was not long a secret in the palace. On the 16th we witnessed the arrival of the commissioners of the allies deputed to accompany his Majesty to the place of his embarkment for the Island of

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Elba. These were Count Schuwaloff, *aide-de-camp* of the Emperor Alexander from Russia; Colonel Neil Campbell[1] from England; General Kohler from Austria; and finally Count of Waldburg-Truchsess for Prussia. Although his Majesty had himself demanded that he should be accompanied by these four commissioners, their presence at Fontainebleau seemed to make a most disagreeable impression on him. However, each of these gentlemen received from the Emperor a different welcome; and after a few words that I heard his Majesty say, I was convinced on this, as on many previous occasions, that he esteemed the English far more than all his other enemies, and Colonel Campbell was, therefore, welcomed with more distinction than the other ministers; while the ill-humor of the Emperor vented itself especially on the commissioner of the King of Prussia, who took no notice of it, and put on the best possible countenance.

With the exception of the very slight apparent change made at Fontainebleau by the presence of these gentlemen, no remarkable incident, none at least in my knowledge, came to disturb the sad and monotonous life of the Emperor in the palace. Everything remained gloomy and silent among the inhabitants of this last imperial residence; but, nevertheless, the Emperor personally seemed to me more calm since he had come to a definite conclusion than at the time he was wavering in painful indecision. He spoke

[1] Born 1770; served with distinction as a colonel in Spain, 1810–1812; wounded at Fère-Champenoise by a Cossack, who mistook him for a Frenchman. He accompanied Napoleon to Elba, as above stated, but was absent on a visit to Florence when the Emperor escaped. He wrote a volume on his recollections of the Emperor. Explored the sources of the Niger, 1816, and died, 1827, while Governor of Sierra Leone. — TRANS.

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sometimes in my presence of the Empress and his son, but not as often as might have been expected. But one thing which struck me deeply was, that never a single time did a a word escape his lips which could recall the act of desperation of the night of the 11th, which fortunately, as we have seen, had not the fatal results we feared. What a night! What a night! In my whole life since I have never been able to think of it without shuddering.

After the arrival of the commissioners of the allied powers, the Emperor seemed by degrees to acclimate himself, so to speak, to their presence; and the chief occupation of the whole household consisted of duties relating to our preparations for departure. One day, as I was dressing his Majesty, he said to me smiling, "Ah, well, my son, prepare your cart; we will go and plant our cabbages." Alas! I was very far from thinking, as I heard these familiar words of his Majesty, that by an inconceivable concurrence of events, I should be forced to yield to an inexplicable fatality, which did not will that in spite of my ardent desire I should accompany the Emperor to his place of exile.

The evening before the day fixed for our departure the grand marshal of the palace had me called. After giving me some orders relative to the voyage, he said to me that the Emperor wished to know what was the sum of money I had in charge for him. I immediately gave an account to the grand marshal; and he saw that the sum total was about three hundred thousand francs, including the gold in a box which Baron Fain had sent me, since he would not be on the journey. The grand marshal said he would present the account to the Emperor. An hour after he again summoned me, and said that his Majesty thought he

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had one hundred thousand francs more. I replied that I had in my possession one hundred thousand francs, which the Emperor had presented to me, telling me to bury it in my garden; in fact, I related to him all the particulars I have described above, and begged him to inquire of the Emperor if it was these one hundred thousand francs to which his Majesty referred. Count Bertrand promised to do this, and I then made the great mistake of not addressing myself directly to the Emperor. Nothing would have been easier in my position; and I had often found that it was always better, when possible, to go directly to him than to have recourse to any intermediate person whatever. It would have been much better for me to act thus, since, if the Emperor had demanded the one hundred thousand francs which he had given me, which, after all, was hardly possible, I was more than disposed to restore them to him without a moment's hesitation. My astonishment may be imagined when the grand marshal reported to me that the Emperor did not remember having given me the sum in question. I instantly became crimson with anger. What! the Emperor had allowed it to be believed by Count Bertrand that I had attempted — I, his faithful servant — to appropriate a sum which he had given me under all the circumstances I have related! I was beside myself at this thought. I left in a state impossible to be described, assuring the grand marshal that in an hour at most I would restore to him the fatal present of his Majesty.

While rapidly crossing the court of the palace I met M. de Turenne, to whom I related all that had occurred. "That does not astonish me," he replied, "and we will see many other similar cases." A prey to a sort of moral

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fever, my head distr cted, my heart oppressed, I sought Denis, the wardrobe boy, of whom I have spoken previously; I found him most fortunately, and hastened with him to my country place; and God is my witness that the loss of the hundred thousand francs was not the cause of my distress, and I hardly thought of it. As on the first occasion, we passed along the side of the woods in order not to be seen; and began to dig up the earth to find the money we had placed there; and in the eagerness with which I hunted for this miserable gold, in order to restore it to the grand marshal, I dug up more than was necessary. I cannot describe my despair when I saw that we had found nothing; I thought that some one had seen and followed us, in fact, that I had been robbed. This was a more crushing blow to me than the first, and I foresaw the consequences with horror; what would be said, what would be thought, of me? Would my word be taken? The grand marshal, already prejudiced by the inexplicable reply of the Emperor, would consider me a person totally devoid of honor. I was overwhelmed by these fatal thoughts when Denis suggested to me that we had not dug in the right spot, and had made a mistake of some feet. I eagerly embraced this ray of hope; we began again to dig up the earth with more eagerness than ever, and I can say without exaggeration that my joy bordered almost on delirium when I saw the first of the bags. We drew out in succession all the five; and with the assistance of Denis I carried them to the palace, and placed them without delay in the hands of the grand marshal, with the keys of the Emperor's trunk, and the casket which M. Fain had committed to me. I said to

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him as I left, "Monseigneur, be good enough to say to his Majesty that I will not accompany him." — "I will tell him."

After this cold and laconic reply I immediately left the palace, and was soon after in Rue du Coq-Gris, with M. Clément, a bailiff, who for a long time had been charged with my small affairs, and had given the necessary attention to my farm during the long absences which the journeys and campaigns of the Emperor necessitated. Then I gave full vent to my despair. I was choking with rage as I remembered that my honesty had been suspected, — I, who for fourteen years had served the Emperor with a disinterestedness which was so scrupulous, and even carried to such a point that many persons called it silliness; I, who had never demanded anything of the Emperor, either for myself or my people! My brain reeled as I tried to explain to myself how the Emperor, who knew all this so well, could have allowed me to appear to a third person as a dishonorable man; the more I thought of it the more extreme became my irritation, and yet it was not possible to find the shadow of a motive for the blow aimed at me. My despair was at its height, when M. Hubert, ordinary *valet de chambre* of the Emperor, came to tell me that his Majesty would give me all I wished if I would follow him, and that three hundred thousand francs would be immediately handed me. In these circumstances, I ask of all honest men, what could I do, and what would they have done in my place? I replied that when I had resolved to consecrate my whole life to the service of the unfortunate Emperor, it was not from views of vile interest; but I was in

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despair at the thought that he should have made me appear before Count Bertrand as an impostor and a dishonest man. Ah! how happy would it then have been for me had the Emperor never thought of giving me those accursed one hundred thousand francs! These ideas tortured me. Ah! if I could only have taken twenty-four hours for reflection, however just might have been my resentment, how gladly would I have sacrificed it! I would have thought of the Emperor alone, and would have followed him; but a sad and inexplicable fatality had not decreed this.

This took place on the 19th of April, the most miserable day of my life. What an evening, what a night I passed! What was my grief on learning the next day that the Emperor had departed at noon, after making his adieux to his guard! When I awoke that morning, all my resentment had been appeased in thinking of the Emperor. Twenty times I wished to return to the palace; twenty times after his departure I wished to take post horses and overtake him; but I was deterred by the offer he had made me through M. Hubert. "Perhaps," I thought, "he will think it is the money which influences me; this will, doubtless, be said by those around him; and what an opinion he will have of me!" In this cruel perplexity I did not dare to decide. I suffered all that it is possible for a man to suffer; and, at times, that which was only too true seemed like a dream to me, so impossible did it seem that I could be where the Emperor was not. Everything in this terrible situation contributed to aggravate my distress. I knew the Emperor well enough to be aware that even had I returned to him then, he would never have

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forgotten that I had wished to leave him; I felt that I had not the strength to bear this reproach from his lips. On the other side, the physical suffering caused by my disease had greatly increased, and I was compelled to remain in bed a long while. I could, indeed, have triumphed over these physical sufferings however cruel they might have been, but in the frightful complications of my position I was reduced to a condition of idiocy; I saw nothing of what was around me; I heard nothing of what was said; and after this statement the reader will surely not expect that I shall have anything to say about the farewell of the Emperor to his old and faithful guard, an account of which, moreover, has been often enough published for the facts to be well known concerning this event, which, besides, took place in public. Here my Memoirs might well close; but the reader, I well believe, cannot refuse me his attention a few moments longer, that I may recall some facts which I have a right to explain, and to relate some incidents concerning the return from the Island of Elba. I, therefore, now continue my remarks on the first of these heads, and the second will be the subject of the next chapter.

The Emperor had then already started; and as for myself, shut up alone, my country house became henceforth a sad residence to me. I held no communication with any one whatever, read no news, and sought to learn none. At the end of a short time I received a visit from one of my friends from Paris, who said to me that the journals spoke of my conduct without understanding it, and that they condemned it severely. He added that it was M. de Turenne who had sent to the editors the note in

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which I had been so heavily censured. I must say that I did not believe this; I knew M. de Turenne too well to think him capable of a proceeding so dishonorable, inasmuch as I had frankly explained everything to him, when he made the answer I gave above. But however the evil came, it was nevertheless done; and by the incredible complications of my position I found myself compelled to keep silence. Nothing certainly would have been easier than to repel the calumny by an exact rehearsal of the facts; but should I justify myself in this manner by, so to speak, accusing the Emperor at a moment especially when the Emperor's enemies manifested much bitterness? When I saw such a great man made a mark for the shafts of calumny, I, who was so contemptible and insignificant among the crowd, could surely allow a few of these envenomed shafts to fall on me. To-day the time has come to tell the truth, and I have done so without restriction; not to excuse myself, for on the contrary I blame myself for not having completely sacrificed myself, and for not having accompanied the Emperor to the Island of Elba regardless of what might have been said. Nevertheless, I may be allowed to say in my own defense, that in this combination of physical and mental sufferings which overwhelmed me all at once, a person must be very sure of infallibility himself to condemn completely this sensitiveness so natural in a man of honor when accused of a fraudulent transaction. This, then, I said to myself, is the recompense for all my care, for the endurance of so much suffering, for unbounded devotion, and a refinement of feeling for which the Emperor had often praised me, and for which he rendered

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me justice later, as will be seen when I shall have occasion to speak of certain circumstances occurring about the 20th of March of the following year.

But gratuitously, and even malevolently, interested motives have been attributed to me for the decision I made to leave the Emperor. The simplest common-sense, on the contrary, would suffice to see that, had I allowed myself to be guided by my interests, everything would have influenced me to accompany his Majesty. In fact, the chagrin which the incident I have mentioned caused me, and the manner in which I was completely overwhelmed by it, have injured my fortune more than any determination to follow the Emperor could possibly have done. What could I hope for in France, where I had no right to anything? Is it not, besides, very evident to whoever would recall my position, which was one of confidence near the Emperor, that, if I had been actuated by a love of money, this position would have given me an opportunity to reap an abundant harvest without injuring my reputation; but my disinterestedness was so well known that, whatever may be said to the contrary, I can assert that during the whole time my favor with the Emperor continued, I on no occasion used it to render any other but unselfish services, and often I refused to support a demand for the sole reason that the petition had been accompanied by offers of money, which were often of very considerable amount. Allow me to cite one example among many others of the same nature. I received one day an offer of the sum of four hundred thousand francs, which was made me by a lady of a very noble family, if I would influence the Emperor to consider favorably a petition in which she claimed indemnity for a piece

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of property belonging to her, on which the port of Bayonne had been constructed. I had succeeded in obtaining favorable answers to applications more difficult than this, but I refused to agree to support her petition solely on account of the offer which had been made to me; I would have been glad to oblige this lady, but only for the pleasure of being obliging, and it was for this reason alone I allowed myself to solicit of the Emperor the pardons which he nearly always granted. Neither can it be said that I ever demanded of the Emperor licenses for lottery drawings, or anything else of this kind, in which, as is well known, a scandalous commerce is often made, and which, no doubt, if I had demanded them of the Emperor he would have readily granted.

The confidence in me which the Emperor had always shown was such that even at Fontainebleau, when it had been decided that none of the ordinary *valets de chambre* were to accompany him to the Island of Elba, the Emperor left to my choice the selection of a young man to assist me in my duties. I selected a boy of the apartments, whose upright character was well known to me, and who was, moreover, the son of Madame Marchand, the head nurse of the King of Rome. I spoke of him to the Emperor, who accepted him; and I went immediately to inform M. Marchand, who received the position most gratefully, and proved to me, by his thanks, how delighted he would be to accompany us. I say us, for at this moment I was very far from foreseeing the succession of fatal events which I have faithfully narrated; and it may be seen afterwards, from the manner in which M. Marchand expressed himself concerning me at the Tuileries during the Hundred Days, that I had not bestowed my confidence unworthily.

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## CHAPTER XXIX.

I become a stranger to all. — Fear of the effects of malevolence. — Reading the journals. — I begin to comprehend the Emperor's greatness. — His Majesty disembarks. — The good master and good man. — Delicacy and uncertainty of my position. — Remembrance of the Emperor's kindness. — His Majesty inquiring news of me. — Words of appreciation. — Approbation of my conduct. — Fruitless malevolence, and justice done me by M. Marchand. — My absence from Paris prolonged. — The Emperor at the Tuileries. — Circumstantial details. — A sergeant of the National Guard twenty-four hours on duty. — Removal of the family portraits of the Bourbons. — The people at the gate of the Carrousel. — *Vive le Roi* and *Vive l'Empereur*. — Frightful panic from the burning of a chimney. — General Exelmans and the tricolored banner. — Cockades preserved. — Arrival of the Emperor. — His Majesty borne on their arms. — On duty in the palace. — First visits. — The archchancellor and Queen Hortense. — Table for three hundred guests. — The father of Marshal Bertrand, and the Emperor's conduct. — The Emperor's supper and the dish of lentils. — An impossible order. — Two grenadiers from the Island of Elba. — A deep sleep. — Four hours a night for the Emperor. — His Majesty, and the officers on half-pay. — M. de Saint-Chamans. — Review on the Carrousel. — The Emperor demanded by the people. — Marshal Bertrand presented to the people by his Majesty. — A touching scene and general enthusiasm. — Continuation of my solitary life. — Tears for his Majesty's misfortunes. — Two later events. — Princess Catharine of Würtemberg. — Nobility of character and superstition. — Thirteen at table, and death of the Princess Eliza. — The first cross of the Legion of Honor worn by the First Consul and Captain Godeau.

I BECAME a stranger to all the world after the departure of the Emperor for the Island of Elba, and, filled with a deep sense of gratitude for the kindness with which his Majesty had overwhelmed me during the fourteen years I had passed in his service, thought incessantly of this great man, and took pleasure in renewing in memory all

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the events, even the most trivial, of my life with him. I thought it best suited my former position to live in retirement, and passed my time most tranquilly in the bosom of my family in the country-house belonging to me. At the same time a fatal idea preoccupied my mind involuntarily; for I feared that persons who were jealous of my former favor might succeed in deceiving the Emperor as to my unalterable devotion to his person, and strengthen in his mind the false opinion that they had for a time succeeded in giving him of me. This opinion, although my conscience told me that it was unjust, was not the less painful to me; but, as will soon be seen, I was fortunate enough to obtain the certainty that my fears in this respect were without foundation.

Although an entire stranger to politics, I had read with deep interest the newspapers I received in my retreat, since the great political change to which the name of the *Restoration* was given; and it seemed to me to need only the simplest common-sense to see the marked difference which existed between the government which had been overthrown and the new. In all departments I saw a succession of titled men take the places of the long list of distinguished men who had given under the Empire so many proofs of merit and courage; but I was far from thinking, notwithstanding the large number of discontented, that the fortunes of the Emperor and the wishes of the army would ever restore him to that throne which he had voluntarily abdicated in order that he might not be the cause of a civil war in France. Therefore, it would be impossible to describe my astonishment, and the multiplicity of varied feelings which agitated me, when I received the first news of the landing

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of the Emperor on the coast of Provence. I read with enthusiasm the admirable proclamation in which he announced that his eagles would fly from steeple to steeple, and that he himself would follow so closely in his triumphal march from the Bay of Juan to Paris.

Here I must make a confession, which is, that only since I had left the Emperor, had I fully comprehended the immensity of his greatness. Attached to his service almost from the beginning of the Consulate, at a time when I was still very young, he had grown, so to speak, without my having perceived it, and I had above all seen in him, from the nature of my duties, the excellent master rather than the great man; consequently, in this instance the effects of distance were very different from what it usually produces. It was with difficulty I could realize, and I am often astonished to-day in recalling the frank candor with which I had dared to defend to the Emperor what I knew to be the truth; his kindness, however, seemed to encourage me in this, for often, instead of becoming irritated by my vehemence, he said to me gently, with a benevolent smile, "Come, come! M. Constant, don't excite yourself." Adorable kindness in a man of such elevated rank! Ah, well! this was the only impression it made on me in the privacy of his chamber, but since then I have learned to estimate it at its true value.

On learning that the Emperor was to be restored to us, my first impulse was to repair at once to the palace, that I might be there on his arrival; but more mature reflection and the advice of my family made me realize that it would be more suitable for me to await his orders, in case he wished to recall me to my former service. I congratulated

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myself on deciding to take the latter course, since I had the happiness to learn that his Majesty had been kind enough to express his approval of my former conduct. I learned from most reliable authority, that he had hardly arrived at the Tuileries, when he condescended to inquire of M. Eible, then concierge of the palace, "Well, what is Constant doing? How is he succeeding? Where is he?" — "Sire, he is at his country-place, which he has not left." — "Ah, very good. He is happy raising his cabbages." I learned also that, during the first days of the Emperor's return, his Majesty had been investigating the list of pensions, and had been good enough to make a note that mine should be increased. Finally, I experienced an intense satisfaction of another kind, no doubt, but none the less sincere in the certainty of not being considered an ingrate. I have stated that I had been fortunate enough to procure a position for M. Marchand with the Emperor; and this is what was related to me by an eye-witness. M. Marchand, in the beginning of the Hundred Days, happened to be in one of the saloons of the palace of the Tuileries, where several persons were assembled, and some of them were expressing themselves most unkindly in regard to me. My successor with the Emperor interrupted them brusquely, saying that there was not a word of truth in the calumnies which were asserted of me; and added that, while I held the position, I had uniformly been most obliging to all persons of the household who had addressed themselves to me, and had done no injury to any one. In this respect I can affirm that M. Marchand told only the truth; but I was none the less deeply grateful to him for so honorably defending me, especially in my absence.

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Not being in Paris on the 20th of March, 1815, as we have just seen, I could have nothing to say of the circumstances of this memorable epoch, had I not collected from some of my friends particulars of what occurred on the night following the re-entrance of the Emperor into the palace, once again become Imperial; and it may be imagined how eager I was to know everything relating to the great man whom we regarded at this moment as the savior of France.

I will begin by repeating exactly the account which was given me by one of my friends, a brave and excellent man, at that time sergeant in the National Guard of Paris, who happened to be on duty at the Tuileries exactly on the 20th of March. "At noon," he said, "three companies of National Guards entered the court of the Tuileries, to occupy all the interior and exterior posts of the palace. I belonged to one of these companies, which formed a part of the fourth legion. My comrades and I were struck with the inexpressible sadness produced by the sight of an abandoned palace. Everything, in fact, was deserted. Only a few men were seen here and there in the livery of the king, occupied in taking down and removing portraits of the various members of the Bourbon family. Outside could be heard the clamorous shouts of a frantic mob, who climbed on the gates, tried to scale them, and pressed against them with such force that at last they bent in several places so far that it was feared they would be thrown down. This multitude of people presented a frightful spectacle, and seemed as if determined to pillage the palace.

"Hardly a quarter of an hour after we entered the

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interior court an accident occurred which, though not serious in itself, threw consternation into our ranks, as well as among those who were pressing against the grating of the Carrousel. We saw flames issuing from the chimney of the King's apartments, which had been accidentally set on fire by a quantity of papers which had just been burned therein. This accident gave rise to most sinister conjectures, and soon the rumor spread that the Tuileries had been undermined ready for an explosion before the departure of Louis XVIII. A patrol was immediately formed of fifteen men of the National Guard, commanded by a sergeant; they explored the château most thoroughly, visited each apartment, descended into the cellars, and assured themselves that there was nowhere the slightest indication of danger.

"Reassured on this point, we were nevertheless not without anxiety. In returning to our posts we had heard numerous groups shouting, '*Vive le Roi! Vivent les Bourbons!*' and we soon had proofs of the exasperation and fury of a part of the people against Napoleon; for we witnessed the arrival in our midst, in a most pitiable condition, of a superior officer who had imprudently donned too soon the tricolored cockade, and consequently had been pursued by the mob from the Rue Saint-Denis. We took him under our protection, and made him enter the interior of the palace, as he was almost exhausted. At this moment we received orders to force the people to withdraw, as they had become still more determined to scale the gates; and in order to accomplish this we were compelled to have recourse to arms.

"We had occupied the post at the Tuileries an hour at

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most when General Excelmans,[1] who had received the chief command of the guard at the château, gave orders to raise the tricolored banner over the middle pavilion.

"The reappearance of the national colors excited among us all emotions of the most intense satisfaction; and immediately the populace substituted the cry of '*Vive l'Empereur*' for that of '*Vive le Roi*,' and nothing else was heard the whole day. As for us, when we were ordered to don the tricolored cockade it was a very easy performance, as a large number of the guard had preserved their old ones, which they had simply covered with a piece of white cambric. We were ordered to stack arms in front of the arch of triumph, and nothing extraordinary occurred until six o'clock; then lights began to shine on the expected route of the Emperor, and a large number of officers on half pay collected near the pavilion of Flora; and I learned from one of them, M. Saunier, a decorated officer, that it was on that side the Emperor would re-enter the palace of the Tuileries. I repaired there in all haste; and as I was hurrying to place myself on his route, I was so fortunate as to meet a commanding officer, who assigned me to duty at the very door of Napoleon's apartment, and to this circumstance I owe the fact that I witnessed what now remains to be related.

"I had for some time remained in expectation, and in almost perfect solitude, when, at fifteen minutes before nine, an extraordinary noise that I heard outside announced to me the Emperor's arrival; and a few moments after I saw

[1] Baron Remi Joseph Isidore Excelmans, born at Bar-le-Duc, 1775. *Aide-de-camp* to Murat, 1801; made a colonel at Austerlitz, 1805; and general of brigade at Eylau, 1807; commanded a division in Russian campaign, 1812, and a corps of cavalry at Waterloo; marshal of France, 1850. Died 1852.—TRANS.

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him appear, amidst cries of enthusiasm, borne on the arms of the officers who had escorted him from the island of Elba. The Emperor begged them earnestly to let him walk; but his entreaties were useless, and they bore him thus to the very door of his apartment, where they deposited him near me. I had not seen the Emperor since the day of his farewell to the National Guard in the great court of the palace; and in spite of the great agitation into which I was thrown by all this commotion, I could not help noticing how much stouter he had become.

"The Emperor had hardly entered his apartments than I was assigned to duty in the interior. Marshal Bertrand, who had just replaced General Excelmans in the command of the Tuileries, gave me an order to allow no one to enter without informing him, and to give him the names of all who requested to see the Emperor. One of the first to present himself was Cambacérès, who appeared to me even more pallid than usual. A short time after came the father of General Bertrand; and as this venerable old man attempted to pay his respects first to the Emperor, Napoleon said to him, 'No, monsieur! nature first;' and in saying this, with a movement as quick as his words, the Emperor, so to speak, threw him into the arms of his son. Next came Queen Hortense, accompanied by her two children; then, Count Regnault de Saint-Jean d'Angély, and many other persons whose names have escaped me. I did not see again those I announced to Marshal Bertrand, as they all went out by another door. I continued this duty till eleven o'clock in the evening, at which time I was relieved of my duties, and was invited to supper at an immense table of about three hundred covers. All the persons presented

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at the palace took their places at this table, one after the other. I there saw the Duke of Vicenza, and found myself placed opposite General Excelmans. The Emperor supped alone in his room with Marshal Bertrand, and their supper was by no means so splendid as ours, for it consisted only of a roast chicken and a dish of lentils; and yet I learned from an officer who had attended him constantly since he left Fontainebleau, that his Majesty had eaten nothing since morning. The Emperor was exceedingly fatigued; I had opportunity to mark this each time his door was opened. He was seated on a chair in front of the fire, with his feet on the mantelpiece.

"As we all remained at the Tuileries, word was sent us about one o'clock that the Emperor had just retired, and that in case any soldiers should arrive during the night who had accompanied him, he had given orders that they should be on duty at the palace conjointly with the National Guard. The poor creatures were hardly in a condition to obey such an order. At two o'clock in the morning we saw two of them arrive in a most pitiable condition; they were perfectly emaciated, and their feet blistered. All that they could do was to throw themselves on their bags, on which they fell sound asleep; and they did not even awake while the duty of bandaging their feet was attended to in the room which they had reached with so much difficulty. All were eager to lavish every attention on them; and I admit that I have always regretted not having inquired the names of these two brave grenadiers, who inspired in all of us an interest I cannot describe.

"After retiring at one o'clock, the Emperor was on his feet at five o'clock in the morning; and the order was im-

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mediately given to the soldiers on half pay to hold themselves ready for a review, and at break of day they were ranged in three ranks. At this moment I was deputed to watch over an officer who was pointed out as suspicious, and who, it was said, had come from Saint-Denis. This was M. de Saint-Chamans. At the end of a quarter of an hour of arrest, which had nothing disagreeable in it, he was simply asked to leave. Meanwhile, the Emperor had descended from the palace, and passed through the ranks of the soldiers on half pay, speaking to each one, taking many of them by the hand, and saying to them, "My friends, I need your services; I rely on you as you may rely on me." Magic words on the lips of Napoleon, and which drew tears of emotion from all those brave soldiers whose services had been ignored for a year.

"From the morning the crowd increased rapidly on all the approaches to the Tuileries, and a mass of people assembled under the windows of the château, demanding with loud shouts to see Napoleon. Marshal Bertrand having informed him of this, the Emperor showed himself at the window, where he was saluted by the shouts which his presence had so often excited. After showing himself to the people, the Emperor himself presented to them Marshal Bertrand, his arm resting on the marshal's shoulder, whom he pressed to his heart with demonstrations of the liveliest affection. During this scene, which deeply affected all the witnesses, who cheered with all their might, officers, standing behind the Emperor and his friend, held above their heads banners surmounted by their eagles, of which they formed a kind of national canopy. At eleven o'clock the Emperor mounted his horse, and reviewed the various regi-

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ments which were arriving from every direction, and the heroes of the island of Elba who had returned to the Tuileries during the night. All seemed deeply impressed with the appearance of these brave men, whom the sun of Italy had tanned, and who had traveled nearly two hundred leagues in twenty days."

These are the curious details which were given to me by a friend; and I can guarantee the truth of his recital the same as if I myself had been an eye-witness of all that occurred during the memorable night of the 20th and 21st March, 1815. Continuing in my retreat during the hundred days, and long after, I have nothing to say which all the world would not know as well as I concerning this important epoch in the life of the Emperor. I have shed many tears over his sufferings at the time of his second abdication, and the tortures inflicted on him at St. Helena by the miserable Hudson Lowe, whose infamy will go down through the ages side by side with the glory of the Emperor. I will simply content myself by adding to the preceding a certain document which was confided to me by the former Queen of Westphalia, and saying a word in conclusion as to the destination I thought best to give to the first cross of the Legion of Honor which the First Consul had worn.

Princess Catharine of Würtemberg, the wife of Prince Jérôme, is, as is well known, a woman of great beauty, gifted at the same time with more solid qualities, which time increases instead of diminishing. She joins, to much natural intelligence, a highly cultivated mind, a character truly worthy of a sister-in-law of the Emperor, and carries even to enthusiasm her love of duty. Events did not

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allow her to become a great queen, but they have not prevented her remaining an accomplished wife. Her sentiments are noble and elevated; but she shows haughtiness to none, and all who surround her take pleasure in boasting of the charms of her kindness towards her household, and she possesses the happiest gift of nature, which consists in making herself beloved by every one. Prince Jérôme is not without a certain grandeur of manner and formal generosity, which he learned while on the throne of Cassel, but he is generally very haughty. Although in consequence of the great changes which have taken place in Europe since the fall of the Emperor, Prince Jérôme owes the comfortable maintenance which he still enjoys to the love of the princess, she does not any the less show a truly exemplary submission to his will. Princess Catharine occupies herself almost exclusively with her three children, two boys and one girl, all of whom are very beautiful. The eldest[1] was born in the month of August, 1814. Her daughter, the Princess Mathilde, owes her superior education to the care her mother exercised over it; she is pretty, but less so than her brothers, who all have their mother's features.

After the description, which is not at all flattered, which I have just given of Princess Catharine, it may seem surprising that, provided as she is with so many solid qualities, she has never been able to conquer an inexplicable weakness regarding petty superstitions. Thus, for instance, she is extremely afraid to seat herself at a table where there are thirteen guests. I will relate an anecdote of which I can

[1] The late Prince Napoleon. Contrary to what Constant says, he strikingly resembled the Emperor. — TRANS.

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guarantee the authenticity, and which, perhaps, may foster the weakness of persons subject to the same superstitions as the Princess of Würtemberg. One day at Florence, being present at a family dinner, she perceived that there were exactly thirteen plates, suddenly grew pale, and obstinately refused to take her seat. Princess Eliza Bacciochi ridiculed her sister-in-law, shrugged her shoulders, and said to her, smiling, "There is no danger, there are in truth fourteen, since I am *enceinte*." Princess Catharine yielded, but with extreme repugnance. A short time after she had to put on mourning for her sister-in-law; and the death of the Princess Eliza, as may well be believed, contributed no little to render her more superstitious than ever as to the number thirteen. Well! let strong minds boast themselves as they may; but I can console the weak, as I dare to affirm that, if the Emperor had witnessed such an occurrence in his own family, an instinct stronger than any other consideration, stronger even than his all-powerful reason, would have caused him some moments of vague anxiety.

Now, it only remains for me to render an account of the bestowal I made of the first cross of honor the First Consul wore. The reader need not be alarmed; I did not make a bad use of it; it is on the breast of a brave soldier of our old army. In 1817 I made the acquaintance of M. Godeau, a former captain in the Imperial Guard. He had been severely wounded at Leipzig by a cannon-ball, which broke his knee. I found in him an admiration for the Emperor so intense and so sincere, he urged me so earnestly to give him something, whatever it might be, which had belonged to his Majesty, that I made him a present of the cross of honor of which I have spoken, as he had long ago

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been decorated with that order. This cross is, I might say, a historical memento, being the first, as I have stated, which his Majesty wore. It is of silver, medium size, and is not surmounted with the imperial crown. The Emperor wore it a year; it decorated his breast for the last time the day of the battle of Austerlitz. From that day, in fact, his Majesty wore an officer's cross of gold with the crown, and no longer wore the cross of a simple member of the legion.

Here my souvenirs would end if, in re-reading the first volumes of my memoirs, the facts I have there related had not recalled to me some others which may be of interest. With the impossibility of presenting them in the proper order and connection, I have decided, in order that the reader may not be deprived of them, to offer them as detached anecdotes, which I have endeavored to class as far as possible, according to the order of time.

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## CHAPTER XXX.

### ANECDOTES AND INCIDENTS.

As I have often had occasion to remark, the Emperor's tastes were extremely simple in everything relating to his person; moreover, he manifested a decided aversion to the usages of fashion; he did not like, so to speak, to turn night into day, as was done in the most of the brilliant circles of society in Paris under the Consulate, and at the commencement of the Empire. Unfortunately, the Empress Josephine did not hold the same views, and being a submissive slave of fashion, liked to prolong her evenings after the Emperor had retired.

She had the habit of then collecting around her her most intimate ladies and a few friends, and giving them tea. Gaming was entirely precluded from these nocturnal reunions, of which conversation was the only charm. This conversation of the highest circles of society was a most agreeable relaxation to the Empress; and this select circle assembled frequently without the Emperor being aware of it, and was, in fact, a very innocent entertainment. Nevertheless, some obliging person was so indiscreet as to make the Emperor a report concerning these assemblies, containing matters which roused his displeasure. He expressed his dissatisfaction to the Empress Josephine, and from that time she retired at the same time as the Emperor.

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These *teas* were then abandoned, and all persons attached to the service of the Emperor received orders not to sit up after the Emperor retired.

As well as I remember, this is how I heard his Majesty express himself on the occasion. "When the masters are asleep, the valets should retire to bed; and when the masters are awake, the valets should be on their feet." These words produced the intended effect; and that very evening, as soon as the Emperor was in bed, all at the palace retired, and at half-past eleven no one was awake but the sentinels.

By degrees, as always occurs, the strict observance of the Emperor's orders was gradually relaxed, still without the Empress daring to resume her nocturnal gatherings. The words of his Majesty were not forgotten, however, and were well remembered by M. Colas, concierge of the pavilion of Flora.

One morning about four o'clock, M. Colas heard an unaccustomed noise, and a continued movement in the interior of the palace, and supposed from this that the Emperor was awake, in which he was not mistaken. He dressed in all haste, and had been ten minutes at his post when the Emperor, descending the staircase with Marshal Duroc, perceived him. His Majesty usually took pleasure in showing that he remarked exactness in fulfilling his orders; therefore he stopped a moment, and said to M. Colas, "Ah! already awake, Colas?" — "Yes, Sire; I have not forgotten that valets should be on foot when the masters are awake." — "You have a good memory, Colas; an excellent thing."

All this was very well, and the day began for M. Colas

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under most favorable auspices; but in the evening the medal of the morning was obliged to show the opposite side. The Emperor went that morning to visit the works on the canal of the Ourcq. He was apparently much dissatisfied; for he returned to the palace in such evident ill-humor, that M. Colas, perceiving it, let these words escape his lips, "*Il y a de l'oignon.*" Although he spoke in a low tone, the Emperor heard him, and turning abruptly to him, repeated angrily, "Yes, Monsieur, you are not mistaken; *il y a de l'oignon.*" He then rapidly remounted the staircase, while the concierge, fearing he had said too much, approached the grand marshal, begging him to excuse him to his Majesty; but he never had an idea of punishing him for the liberty he had taken, and the expression which had escaped his lips one would hardly expect to find in the imperial vocabulary.

The coming of the Pope to Paris for the purpose of crowning the Emperor is one of those events which suffice to mark the grandeur of a period. The Emperor never spoke of it except with extreme satisfaction, and he wished his Holiness to be received with all the magnificence which should attend the founder of a great empire. With this intention his Majesty gave orders that, without any comment, everything should be furnished not only that the Pope, but also all that the persons of his suite, might demand. Alas! it was not by his own personal expenses that the Holy Father assisted to deplete the imperial treasury: Pius VII. drank only water, and his sobriety was truly apostolic; but this was not the case with the abbés attached to his service, for these gentlemen each day required

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five bottles of Chambertin wine, without counting those of other kinds and most expensive liquors.

This recalls another occurrence, which, however, relates only indirectly to the Pope's stay in Paris. It is known that David was ordered by the Emperor to execute the picture of the coronation, a work which offered an incredible number of almost insurmountable difficulties, and which was, in fact, one of the masterpieces of the great painter.

At all events, the preparation of this picture gave rise to controversies in which the Emperor was compelled to interfere; and the case was serious, as we shall see, since a Cardinal's wig was in question. David persisted in not painting the head of Cardinal Caprara with a wig; and on his part the Cardinal was not willing to allow him to paint his head without the wig. Some took sides with the painter, some with the model; and though the affair was treated with much diplomacy, no concession could be obtained from either of the contracting parties, until at last the Emperor took the part of his first painter against the Cardinal's wig. This recalls the story of the artless man who would not allow his head to be painted bare because he took cold so easily, and his picture would be hung in a room without a fire.

When M. de Bourrienne left the Emperor, as is well known, he was replaced by M. de Méneval, who had been formerly in the service of Prince Joseph. The Emperor became more and more attached to his new private secretary in proportion as he came to know him better. By degrees the work of the cabinet, in which was transacted

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the greater part of the most important business, became so considerable that it was impossible for one man alone to perform it; and from the year 1805 two young men, *protégés* of M. Maret, secretary of state, were admitted to the honor of working in the Emperor's cabinet; and though initiated by the nature of their duties into the most important state secrets, there was never the slightest reason to suspect their perfect discretion. They were, besides, very diligent, and endowed with much talent, so that his Majesty formed an excellent opinion of them. Their position was most enviable. Lodged in the palace, and consequently supplied with fuel and lights, they were also fed, and received each a salary of eight thousand francs. It might well have been thought that this sum would be sufficient for these gentlemen to live most comfortably; but this was not the case. For if they were assiduous during the hours of labor, they were not less so during those devoted to pleasure; whence it arose that the second quarter had hardly passed before the whole year's salary was spent, — part of it in gambling, and the rest among low companions.

Among the two secretaries added to the Emperor's service, there was one especially who had contracted so many debts, and whose creditors were so pitiless, that, had there been no other reason, he would infallibly have been dismissed from the private cabinet if the report of this had reached his Majesty's ears.

After passing an entire night reflecting on his embarrassing position, searching his imagination to secure some means of obtaining the sum necessary to satisfy those creditors who were most importunate, the new spendthrift

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sought distraction in work, and went to his desk at five o'clock in the morning in order to drive away his painful thoughts, not thinking that at this hour any one would hear him, and while working began to whistle *La Linotte* with all his might. Now, this morning, as often before, the Emperor had already been working a whole hour in his cabinet, and had just gone out as the young man entered, and, hearing this whistling, immediately returned.

"Already here, Monsieur," said his Majesty. "Zounds! Why, that is remarkable! Maret should be well satisfied with you. What is your salary?" — "Sire, I have eight thousand francs a year, and besides am boarded and lodged in the palace." — "That is well, Monsieur, and you ought to be very happy."

The young man, seeing that his Majesty was in a very good humor, thought that fortune had sent him a favorable opportunity of being relieved of his embarrassment, and resolved to inform the Emperor of his trying situation. "Alas, Sire!" said he, "no doubt I ought to be happy, but I am not." — "Why is that?" — "Sire, I must confess to your Majesty that I have so many *English* to carry, and besides I have to support an old father, two sisters, and a brother." — "You are only doing your duty. But what do you mean by your *English?* Are you supporting them also?" — "No, Sire; but it is they who have fed my pleasures, with the money they have lent me, and all who have creditors now call them *the English.*" — "Stop! stop, Monsieur! What! you have creditors, and in spite of your large salary you have made debts! That is enough, Monsieur. I do not wish to have any longer near me a man who has recourse to the gold of *the English*, when

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on what I give him he can live honorably. In an hour you will receive your discharge."

The Emperor, having expressed himself as we have just heard, picked up some papers from the desk, threw a severe glance at the young secretary, and left him in such a state of despair that, when some one else fortunately entered the cabinet, he was on the point of committing suicide with a long paper-cutter he held in his hand. This person was the *aide-de-camp* on duty, who brought him a letter from the Emperor, couched in the following terms:—

"Monsieur, you deserve to be dismissed from my service, but I have thought of your family, and I pardon you on their account; and since it is they who would suffer from your misconduct, I consequently send you with my pardon ten thousand francs in bank-notes. Pay with this sum all *the English* who torment you, and, above all, do not again fall into their clutches; for in that case I shall abandon you.

NAPOLEON."

An enormous "*Vive l'Empereur!*" sprang spontaneously to the lips of the young man, who darted out like lightning to announce to his family this new proof of imperial tyranny.

This was not the end, however; for his companion, having been informed of what had taken place, and also desiring some bank-notes to pacify his English, redoubled his zeal and activity in work, and for several days in succession repaired to the cabinet at four in the morning, and also whistled *La Linotte;* but it was all in vain, the Emperor did not seem to hear him.

Much was said at Paris and in the Court in ridicule of the ludicrous sayings of the wife of Marshal Lefebvre, and a

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collection could be made of her queer speeches, many of which are pure fabrications; but a volume would also be necessary to record all the acts by which she manifested her kindness of heart.

One day, at Malmaison (I think a short time after the Empire was founded), the Empress Josephine had given explicit orders that no one should be admitted. The Maréchale Lefebvre presented herself; but the usher, compelled by his orders, refused to allow her to enter. She insisted, and he still refused. During this discussion, the Empress, passing from one apartment to the other, was seen through a glass door which separated this apartment from that in which the duchess then was. The Empress, having also seen her, hastily advanced to meet her, and insisted on her entering. Before passing in, Madame Lefebvre turned to the usher, and said to him in a mocking tone, "Well, my good fellow, you see I got in!" The poor usher blushed up to his ears, and withdrew in confusion.

Marshal Lefebvre was not less good, less excellent, than his wife; and it might well be said of them that high honors had made no change in their manners. The good they both did could not be told. It might have been said that this was their only pleasure, the only compensation for a great domestic misfortune. They had only one son, who was one of the worst men in the whole Empire. Each day there were complaints against him; the Emperor himself frequently admonished him on account of the high esteem he had for his brave father. But there resulted no improvement, and his natural viciousness only manifested itself the more. He was killed in some battle, I forget which; and as

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little worthy of regret as he was, his death was a deep affliction to his excellent mother, although he even forgot himself so far as to speak disrespectfully of her in his coarse speeches. She usually made M. de Fontanes[1] the confidant of her sorrows; for the grand master of the university, notwithstanding his exquisite politeness and his admirable literary style, was very intimately associated with the household of Marshal Lefebvre.

In this connection I recall an anecdote which proves better than anything that could be said the kindness and perfect simplicity of the marshal. One day it was announced to him that some one whose name was not given wished to speak to him. The marshal left his cabinet, and recognized his old captain in the French Guards, in which, as we have said, the marshal had been a sergeant. The marshal begged permission to embrace him, offered his services, his purse, his house; treated him almost exactly as if he had been under his orders. The old captain was an *émigré*, and had returned undecided what he would do. Through the efforts of the marshal his name was promptly struck out of the list of *émigrés;* but he did not wish to re-enter the army, and yet was in much need of a position. Having supported himself during his emigration by giving lessons in French and Latin, he expressed a desire to obtain a position in the university. "Well, my colonel," said the marshal with his German accent, "I will take you at once to my friend M. de Fontanes." The marshal's carriage is soon at the

[1] Count Louis de Fontanes, born at Niort, 1757; expelled to England by the Directory, 1797; recalled by the First Consul, 1800; pronounced the celebrated eulogy on Washington; president of the Corps Législatif, 1804; peer and grand master of the Imperial University, 1808; senator, 1810; died 1821. — TRANS.

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door, and the respectful protector and his *protégé* enter the apartments of the grand master of the university. M. de Fontanes hastens to meet the marshal, who, I have been informed, made his presentation speech in this style: "My dear friend, I present to you the Marquis of ——. He was my former captain, my good captain. He would like to obtain a place in the university. Ah! he is not a man of nothing, a man of the Revolution like you and me. He is my old captain, the Marquis of ——." Finally the marshal closed by saying, "Ah, the good, excellent man! I shall never forget that when I went for orders to my good captain, he never failed to say: '*Lefebvre, my child, pass on to the kitchen; go and get something to eat.*' Ah, my good, my excellent captain!"

All the members of the imperial family had a great fondness for music, and especially the Italian; but they were not musicians, and most of them sang as badly as his Majesty himself, with the exception of the Princess Pauline, who had profited by the lessons of Blangini, and sang tolerably well. In respect of his voice, Prince Eugène showed himself worthy to be the adopted son of the Emperor; for, though he was a musician and sang with fervor, it was not in such a manner as to satisfy his auditors. In compensation, however, Prince Eugène's voice was magnificent for commanding military evolutions, an advantage which Count Lobau and General Dorsenne also possessed; and it was consequently always one of these whom his Majesty appointed to command under his orders on great reviews.

Notwithstanding the severe etiquette of the Emperor's

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From an old Drawing by F. Grenier

PREPARATIONS FOR THE ADVANCE OF THE OLD GUARD AT WATERLOO

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court, there were always a few privileged persons who had the right to enter his apartment, even when he was in bed, though the number was small. They consisted of the following persons: —

M. de Talleyrand, vice grand elector; de Montesquiou, grand chamberlain; de Rémusat, first chamberlain; Marét, Corvisart, Denon, Murat, Yvan; Duroc, grand marshal; and de Caulaincourt, grand equerry.

For a long time all these personages came to the Emperor's apartment almost every morning, and their visits were the origin of what was afterwards called *le petit lever*. M. de Lavalette also came frequently, and also M. Réal and Messieurs Fouché and Savary while each of them was minister of police.

The princes of the imperial family also enjoyed the right to enter the Emperor's apartment in the morning. I often saw the Emperor's mother. The Emperor kissed her hand with much respect and tenderness, but I have many times heard him reproach her for her excessive economy. Madame Mère listened, and then gave as excuse for not changing her style of living reasons which often vexed his Majesty, but which events have unfortunately justified.

Madame Mère had been a great beauty, and was still very pretty, especially when I saw her for the first time. It was impossible to find a better mother; devoted to her children, she lavished on them the sagest counsels, and always intervened in family quarrels to sustain those whom she thought in the right; for a long time she took Lucien's part, and I have often heard her warmly defend Jérôme when the First Consul was most severe towards his young brother. The only fault in Madame Mère's character was

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her excessive economy, and on this point astonishing things could be said without fear of exaggeration; but she was beloved by every one in the palace for her kindness and affability.

I recall in reference to Madame Mère an incident which greatly amused the Empress Josephine. *Madame* was spending several days at Malmaison, when one day one of her ladies, whom she had caused to be sent for, found, on entering the room, to her great astonishment, Cardinal Fesch discharging the duty of a lady's maid by lacing up his sister, who had on only her underclothing and her corset.

One of the subjects on which the Emperor would listen to no raillery was that of custom-house duties, and towards all contraband proceeding he showed inflexible severity; and this reached such a point, that one day M. Soiris, director of the custom-house at Verceil, having seized a package of sixty cashmere shawls, sent from Constantinople to the Empress, the Emperor approved his action, and the cashmeres were sold for the benefit of the state. In such cases the Emperor always said, "How can a sovereign have the laws respected if he does not respect them himself?" I recall another occasion, and I think the only instance in which he permitted an infraction of the custom-house regulations; but we shall see the question was not that of ordinary smuggling.

The grenadiers of the Old Guard, under the orders of General Soulès, returned to France after the peace of Tilsit. On their arrival at Mayence, the custom-house officers endeavored to perform their duty, and consequently inspected the chests of the Guard and those of the general. Mean-

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while, the director of the custom-house, in doubt what proceedings to take, sought the general to inform him of the necessity he was under of executing the laws, and of carrying out the direct orders of the Emperor. The general's reply to this courteous overture was plain and energetic: "If a single officer dares to place his hand on the boxes of my old mustaches, I'll throw him into the Rhine!" The officer insisted. The custom-house employees were quite numerous, and were preparing to proceed with the inspection, when General Soulès had the boxes put in the middle of the square, and a regiment detailed to guard them. The director of the custom-house, not daring to proceed further, sent to the director-general a report to be submitted to the Emperor. Under any other circumstances the case would have been serious; but the Emperor had just returned to Paris, where he had been welcomed more heartily than ever before by the acclamations of the people on the occasion of the *fêtes* celebrated in honor of peace, and this old Guard was returning home resplendent with glory, and after most admirable behavior at Eylau. All these things combined to quell the Emperor's anger; and having decided not to punish, he wished to reward them, and not to take seriously their infraction of his custom-house regulations. General Soulès, on reaching Paris, presented himself before the Emperor, who received him cordially, and, after some remarks relative to the Guard, added: "By the by, what is this you have been doing? I heard of you. What! you really threatened to throw my custom-house officers into the Rhine! Would you have done it?"—"Yes, Sire," replied the general, with his German accent, "yes; I would have done it. It was an insult to my old grenadiers to attempt

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to inspect their boxes."—"Come, now," said the Emperor very affably, "I see just how it is. You have been smuggling."—"I, Sire?"—"Yes, I say. You have been smuggling. You bought linen in Hanover. You wanted to furnish your house handsomely, as you imagined I would appoint you senator. You were not mistaken. Go and have your senator's coat made, but do not repeat this performance, for next time I will have you shot."

During our stay at Bayonne, in 1808, every one was struck with the awkward manners of the King and Queen of Spain, and the poor taste displayed in their toilets, the disgraceful appearance of their equipages, and a certain air of constraint and embarrassment which was general among all the persons of their suite. The elegant manners of the French and the magnificence of the imperial equipages furnished such a contrast to all this that it rendered them indescribably ridiculous. The Emperor, who had such exquisite tact in all matters, was not one of the last to perceive this, but, nevertheless, was not pleased that an opportunity should be found to ridicule crowned heads. One morning at his toilet he said to me, "I say, then, *Monsieur le drôle*, you, who are so well versed in these matters, give a few hints to the *valet de chambre* of the King and Queen of Spain. They appear so awkward they really excite my pity." I eagerly did what his Majesty suggested; but he did not content himself with this, but also communicated to the Empress Josephine his observations on the queen and her ladies. The Empress Josephine, who was thee mbodiment of taste, gave orders accordingly; and for two days her hairdressers and women were occupied exclusively in giving lessons in taste and elegance to their

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Spanish brethren. This is a striking evidence of how the Emperor found time for everything, and could descend from his elevated duties to the most insignificant affairs.

The grand marshal of the palace (Duroc) was almost the same height as the Emperor. He walked badly and ungracefully, but had a tolerably good head and features. He was quick tempered, impulsive, and swore like a soldier; but he had much administrative ability, of which he gave more than one proof in the organization of the imperial household, which was ably and wisely regulated. When the enemy's cannon deprived his Majesty of this devoted servitor and sincere friend, the Empress Josephine said that she knew only two men capable of filling his place; these were General Drouot and M. de Flahaut, and the whole household hoped that one of these two gentlemen would be nominated; this, however, was not the case.

M. de Caulaincourt, Duke of Vicenza, was extremely severe towards the household; but he was just and of a chivalrous loyalty, and his word was as good as a contract. He was feared and yet beloved. He had a piercing eye, spoke quickly and with great ease. The Emperor's regard for him was well known, and certainly no one was more worthy of it than he.

The Count de Rémusat was of medium height, with a smooth, white face, obliging, amiable, and with natural politeness and good taste; but he was extravagant, lacked order in managing his own affairs and consequently those of the Emperor. This lavish expenditure, which is admirable from one point of view, might have suited any other sovereign; but the Emperor was economical, and though

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much attached to M. de Rémusat, dismissed him from the head of the wardrobe bureau, and put in his place Monsieur de Turenne, who exercised the strictest economy. M. de Turenne possessed perhaps a little too much of what his predecessor lacked, but it was exactly this that pleased the Emperor. M. de Turenne was quite a pretty man, thinking perhaps a little too much of himself, a great talker and Anglo-maniac, which led the Emperor to give him the name of *my lord Kinsester* (who cannot be silent); but he told a story well, and sometimes his Majesty took pleasure in making him relate the chronicles of Paris.

When the Count of Turenne replaced the Count of Rémusat in the office of grand master of the wardrobe, in order not to exceed the sum of twenty thousand francs which his Majesty allowed for his toilet, he exercised the greatest possible economy in the quantity, price, and quality of things indispensable to the household. I have been told, but I do not know whether it is true, that, in order to ascertain exactly what were the profits of the Emperor's furnishers, he went to the various factories of Paris with samples of gloves, silk stockings, aloes wood, etc.; but, even if this is true, it only does honor to the zeal and probity of M. de Turenne.

I knew very little of Count Ségur, grand master of ceremonies. It was said in the household that he was haughty and somewhat abrupt, but perfectly polite and intelligent, with a delicate and refined face.

It would be necessary to have witnessed the perfect order which reigned in the Emperor's household to comprehend it fully. From the time of the Consulate, General

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Duroc had brought into the administration of the interior affairs of the palace that spirit of order and economy which especially characterized him. But, great as was the Emperor's confidence in General Duroc, he did not disdain to throw the glance of a master over things which seemed insignificant, and with which, in general, sovereigns rarely occupy themselves. Thus, for example, in the beginning of the Empire there was some little extravagance in certain parts of the palace, notably at Saint-Cloud, where the *aides-de-camp* kept open table; but this was, nevertheless, far from equaling the excessive prodigality of the ancient *régime*. Champagne and other wines especially were used in great quantities, and it was very necessary that the Emperor should establish regulations as to his cellar. He summoned the chief of the household service, Soupé Pierrugues, and said to him, "Monsieur, I commit to you the keys of my imperial cellars; you will there have charge of the wines of all kinds; some are needed in my palaces of the Tuileries, Saint-Cloud, Compiègne, Fontainebleau, Marrac, Lacken, and Turin. Establish a moderate price at all these residences, and you alone will furnish wines to my household." This arrangement was made, and all kinds of fraud were impossible, as the deputy of M. Soupé Pierrugues delivered wines only on a note signed by the controller of the kitchen; all the bottles not opened were returned, and each evening an account was given of what had been used for that day.

The service had the same regulations while we were on campaigns. During the second campaign of Vienna, I recollect that the house deputy of Soupé Pierrugues was M. Eugène Pierrugues, frank, gay, witty, and much beloved by

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us all. An imprudence cost him dear, for in consequence of a heedlessness natural at his age he had his arm broken. We were then at Schoenbrunn. Those who have seen this imperial residence know that splendid avenues extend in front of the palace, leading to the road to Vienna. As I often took horseback rides through the town, M. Eugène Pierrugues wished to accompany me one day, and borrowed a horse from one of the quartermasters of the palace. He was forewarned that the horse was very fiery; but he paid no attention to that, and immediately put him into a gallop. I reined mine in, in order not to excite my companion's; but in spite of this precaution the horse ran away, dashed into the woods, and broke the arm of his unfortunate and imprudent rider. M. Eugène Pierrugues was, however, not unhorsed by the blow, and kept his seat a short while after the injury; but it was very serious, and it was necessary to carry him back to the palace. I, more than any one else, was distressed by this frightful accident; and we established a regular attendance on him, so that one at least could always be with him when our duties allowed. I have never seen suffering borne with more fortitude; and it was carried to such a remarkable degree, that, finding his arm badly set, at the end of a few days he had it again fractured, an operation which caused him horrible suffering.

My uncle, who was usher of the Emperor's cabinet, related to me an anecdote which is probably entirely unknown; since everything, as we shall see, occurred under cover of the most profound mystery. "One evening," he said to me, "Marshal Duroc gave me in person orders to extinguish the lights in the saloon in front of his

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Majesty's cabinet, and to leave only a few candles lighted. I was surprised at such a novel order, especially as the grand marshal was not accustomed to give them thus directly, but, nevertheless, executed it precisely, and waited at my post. At ten o'clock Marshal Duroc returned, accompanied by a personage whose features it was impossible to distinguish, as he was entirely wrapped in a large cloak, his head covered, and his hat pulled down over his eyes. I withdrew, leaving the two alone, but had hardly left the saloon when the Emperor entered, and Marshal Duroc also retired, leaving the stranger alone with his Majesty. From the tone in which the Emperor spoke it was easy to see that he was greatly irritated. He spoke very loud; and I heard him say, 'Well, Monsieur, you will never change then. It is gold you want, always gold. You draw on all foreign banks, and have no confidence in that of Paris. You have ruined the bank of Hamburg; you have caused M. Drouet (or Drouaut, for the name was pronounced very quickly) to lose two millions.'

"The Emperor," my uncle continued, "conversed in this strain for a long while, though the stranger did not reply, or replied in so low a tone that it was impossible to hear a word; and the scene, which must have been most trying to the mysterious personage, lasted about twenty minutes. At last he was permitted to leave, which he did with the same precautions as on his arrival, and retired from the palace as secretly as he had come."

Nothing of this scene was known in Paris; and, moreover, neither my uncle nor I have ever sought to ascertain the name of the person whom the Emperor overwhelmed with such numerous and severe reproaches.

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Whenever circumstances allowed, the Emperor's habits of life were very regular, his time being almost uniformly divided as follows. Every morning, at nine o'clock precisely, the Emperor left the imperial apartments; his exactness in observing hours was carried to an extreme, and I have sometimes seen him wait two or three moments in order that no one might be taken by surprise. At nine o'clock his toilet was made for the whole day. When he had reached the reception-room, the officers on duty were first admitted, and received his Majesty's orders for their time of service.

Immediately after this what was called the *grandes entrées* took place. That is to say, personages of high rank were admitted, who had this right on account of their duties, or by the special favor of the Emperor; and I can assert that this favor was much envied. It was granted generally to all the officers of the imperial household, even if they were not on duty; and every one remained standing, as did the Emperor also. He made the tour of all the persons present, nearly always addressed a remark or a question to each one; and it was amusing to see afterwards, during the whole day, the proud and haughty bearing of those to whom the Emperor had spoken a little longer than to others. This ceremony usually lasted a half-hour, and as soon as it was finished the Emperor bowed and each retired.

At half-past nine the Emperor's breakfast was served, usually on a small mahogany stand; and this first repast commonly lasted only seven or eight minutes, though sometimes it was prolonged, and even lasted quite a long while. This, however, was only on rare occasions, when the Em-

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peror was in unusually good-humor, and wished to indulge in the pleasure of a conversation with men of great merit, whom he had known a long while, and who happened to be present at his breakfast. There he was no longer the formal Emperor of the *levée;* he was in a manner the hero of Italy, the conqueror of Egypt, and above all the member of the Institute. Those who came most habitually were Messieurs Monge,[1] Berthollet,[2] Costaz (superintendent of crown buildings), Denon,[3] Corvisart, David, Gérard,[4] Isabey, Talma,[5] and Fontaine (his first architect). How many noble thoughts, how many elevated sentiments, found vent in these conversations which the Emperor was accustomed

[1] Gaspard Monge, Count de Péluse (Pelusium), the creator of descriptive geometry, was born at Beaune, 1746. At twenty years of age, having made improvements in the art of fortification, he became professor at Mézières; minister of marine, 1792; in 1795 he issued his *Descriptive Geometry*, and organized the Polytechnic school. He accompanied Napoleon to Egypt, 1798. Under the Empire, senator, Count of Péluse, and grand officer of the Legion of Honor. Died 1818, having done more for the science of geometry than any one since Archimedes. — TRANS.

[2] Claude Louis Berthollet, the eminent chemical philosopher, was born near Annecy, Savoy, 1748, and graduated in medicine at Turin, 1768. He made many important discoveries in chemistry. Aided by Monge, he selected the Italian works of art sent to Paris by Napoleon, 1796, and accompanied him to Egypt two years later. Count and senator under the Empire, and a peer under the Bourbons, and the author of many treatises on chemistry. Died 1822. — TRANS.

[3] Dominique Vivant Denon, eminent author and artist, born at Châlons-sur-Saône, 1747. Employed prior to the Revolution in diplomatic missions to Russia, Switzerland, and Naples. In 1798 accompanied Napoleon to Egypt. Director-general of museums in 1802; accompanied Napoleon in several campaigns, and showed intrepidity by making designs in the midst of battles. Died 1825. — TRANS.

[4] François Gérard, the eminent painter, was born at Rome, 1770, and studied at Paris under David. He painted a great number of portraits and historical scenes. Died 1836. — TRANS.

[5] François Joseph Talma, celebrated tragedian, born in Paris, 1763; died 1826. David, Isabey, and Fontaine have been mentioned in preceding notes. — TRANS.

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to open by saying, "Come, Messieurs, I close the door of my cabinet." This was the signal, and it was truly miraculous to see his Majesty's aptitude in putting his genius in communication with these great intellects with such diversities of talent.

I recall that, during the days preceding the Emperor's coronation, M. Isabey attended regularly at the Emperor's breakfast, and was present almost every morning; and strange, too, it did not seem an absurd thing to see children's toys used to represent the imposing ceremony which was to exert such a great influence over the destinies of the world. The intelligent painter of his Majesty's cabinet portraits caused to be placed on a large table a number of small figures representing all the personages who were to take part in the ceremony of the coronation; each had his designated place; and no one was omitted, from the Emperor to the Pope, and even to the choristers, each being dressed in the costume he was expected to wear.

These rehearsals took place frequently, and all were eager to consult the model in order to make no mistake as to the place each was to occupy. On those days, as may be imagined, *the door of the cabinet was closed*, and in consequence the ministers sometimes waited awhile. Immediately after the breakfast the Emperor admitted his ministers and director generals; and these audiences, devoted to the special work of each minister and of each director, lasted until six o'clock in the evening, with the exception of those days on which his Majesty occupied himself exclusively with governmental affairs, and presided over the council of state, or the ministerial councils.

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At the Tuileries and at Saint-Cloud dinner was served at six o'clock; and the Emperor dined each day alone with the Empress, except on Sunday, when all the family were admitted to dinner. The Emperor, Empress, and Madame Mère only were seated in armchairs; all others, whether kings or queens, having only ordinary chairs. There was only one course before the dessert. His Majesty usually drank Chambertin wine, but rarely without water, and hardly more than one bottle. To dine with the Emperor was rather an honor than a pleasure to those who were admitted; for it was necessary, to use the common expression, to *swallow in post haste*, as his Majesty never remained at table more than fifteen or eighteen minutes. After his dinner, as after breakfast, the Emperor habitually took a cup of coffee, which the Empress poured out. Under the Consulate Madame Bonaparte began this custom, because the General often forgot to take his coffee; she continued it after she became Empress, and the Empress Marie Louise retained the same custom.

After dinner the Empress descended to her apartments, where she found assembled her ladies and the officers on duty; and the Emperor sometimes accompanied her, but remained only a short while. Such was the customary routine of life in the palace at the Tuileries on those days when there was neither the chase in the morning, nor concert nor theater in the evening; and the life at Saint-Cloud differed little from that at the Tuileries. Sometimes rides were taken in coaches when the weather permitted; and on Wednesday, the day set for the council of ministers, these officials were invariably honored by an invitation to dine with their Majesties. When there was a hunt at Fontaine-

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bleau, Rambouillet, or Compiègne, the usual routine was omitted; the ladies followed in coaches, and the whole household dined with the Emperor and Empress under a tent erected in the forest. It sometimes happened, though rarely, that the Emperor invited unexpectedly some members of his family to remain to dine with him; and this recalls an anecdote which should have a place in this connection. The King of Naples came one day to visit the Emperor, and being invited to dine, accepted, forgetting that he was in morning dress, and there was barely time for him to change his costume, and consequently none to return to the Élysée, which he then inhabited. The king ran quickly up to my room, and informed me of his embarrassment, which I instantly relieved, to his great delight. I had at that time a very handsome wardrobe, almost all the articles of which were then entirely new; so I gave him a shirt, vest, breeches, stockings, and shoes, and assisted him to dress, and fortunately everything fitted as if it had been made especially for him. He showed towards me the same kindness and affability he always manifested, and thanked me in the most charming manner. In the evening the King of Naples, after taking leave of the Emperor, returned to my room to resume his morning dress, and begged me to come to him next day at the Élysée, which I did punctually after relating to the Emperor all that had occurred, much to his amusement. On my arrival at the Élysée I was immediately introduced into the king's apartments, who repeated his thanks in the most gracious manner, and gave me a pretty Bréguet [1] watch.

[1] Abraham Louis Bréguet, the celebrated watchmaker, was born at Neuchâtel, 1747; died 1823. He made numerous improvements in watches and in nautical and astronomical instruments. — TRANS.

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During our campaigns I sometimes had occasion to render little services of the same nature to the King of Naples; but the question was not then, as at Saint-Cloud, one of silk stockings, for more than once on the bivouac I shared with him a bundle of straw, which I had been fortunate enough to procure. In such cases I must avow the sacrifice was much greater on my part than when I had shared my wardrobe with him. The king was not backward in expressing his gratitude; and I thought it a most remarkable thing to see a sovereign, whose palace was filled with all that luxury can invent to add to comfort, and all that art can create which is splendid and magnificent, only too happy in procuring half of a bundle of straw on which to rest his head.

I will now give some fresh souvenirs which have just recurred to my mind concerning the Court theater. At Saint-Cloud, in order to reach the theater hall, it was necessary to cross the whole length of the Orangery; and nothing could be more elegant than the manner in which it was decorated on these occasions. Rows of rare plants were arranged in tiers, and the whole lighted by lamps; and during the winter the boxes were hidden by covering them with moss and flowers, which produced a charming effect under the lights.

The parterre of the theater was usually filled with generals, senators, and councilors of state; the first boxes were reserved for the princes and princesses of the imperial family, for foreign princes, marshals, their wives, and ladies of honor. In the second tier were placed all persons attached to the Court. Between the acts, ices and refresh-

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ments were served; but the ancient etiquette had been re-established in one particular, which greatly displeased the actors, — no applause was allowed; and Talma often told me that the kind of coldness produced by this silence was very detrimental at certain parts where the actor felt the need of being enthused. Nevertheless, it sometimes happened that the Emperor, in testimony of his satisfaction, made a slight signal with his hand; and then and also at the grandest periods we heard, if not applause, at least a flattering murmur which the spectators were not always able to repress.

The chief charm of these brilliant assemblies was the presence of the Emperor; and consequently an invitation to the theater of Saint-Cloud was an honor much desired. In the time of the Empress Josephine there were no representations at the palace in the absence of the Emperor; but when Marie Louise was alone at Saint-Cloud during the campaign of Dresden, two representations a week were given, and the whole *répertoire* of Grétry[1] was played in succession before her Majesty. At the end of each piece there was always a little ballet.

The theater of Saint-Cloud was, so to speak, on more than one occasion the theater of first attempts. For instance, M. Raynouard played there for the first time the *États de Blois*, a work which the Emperor would not allow to be played in public, and which was not done, in fact, until after the return of Louis XVIII.

*The Venetians* by M. Amand also made its first appearance on the theater of Saint-Cloud, or rather of Malmaison.

[1] André Ernest Grétry, the celebrated opera composer, was born at Liège, 1741; died 1813. — TRANS.

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This was not highly considered at the time; but the infallible judgment the Emperor displayed in his choice of plays and actors was most remarkable. He generally gave M. Corvisart the preference in deciding these matters, on which he descanted with much complacence when his more weighty occupations allowed. He was usually less severe and more just than Geoffroy; [1] and it is much to be desired that the criticisms and opinions of the Emperor concerning authors and actors could have been preserved. They would have been of much benefit to the progress of art.

In speaking of the retreat from Moscow, I related previously in my memoirs that I had the good fortune to offer a place in my carriage to the young Prince of Aremberg, and assisted him in continuing his journey. I recall another occasion in the life of this prince, when one of my friends was very useful to him, some particulars of which may not be without interest.

The Prince of Aremberg, an ordnance officer of the Emperor, had, as we know, married Mademoiselle Tascher, niece of the Empress Josephine. Having been sent into Spain, he was there taken by the English, and afterwards carried a prisoner to England. His captivity was at first very disagreeable; and he told me himself that he was very unhappy, until he made the acquaintance of one of my friends, M. Herz, commissary of war, who possessed a fine mind, was very intelligent, spoke several languages, and was, like the prince, a prisoner in England. The ac-

[1] Abbé Julien Louis Geoffroy, celebrated critic and editor, born at Rennes, 1743; died 1814. — TRANS.

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quaintance formed at once between the prince and M. Herz soon became so intimate that they were constantly together; and thus passed the time as happily as it can with one far from his native land and deprived of his liberty.

They were living thus, ameliorating for each other the *ennui* of captivity, when M. Herz was exchanged, which was, perhaps, a great misfortune for him, as we shall afterwards see. At all events, the prince was deeply distressed at being left alone; but, nevertheless, gave M. Herz several letters to his family, and at the same time sent his mother his mustache, which he had mounted in a medallion with a chain. One day the Princess of Aremberg arrived at Saint-Cloud and demanded a private audience of the Emperor.

"My son," said she, "demands your Majesty's permission to attempt his escape from England." — "Madame," said the Emperor, "your request is most embarrassing! I do not forbid your son, but I can by no means authorize him."

It was at the time I had the honor of saving the Prince of Aremberg's life that I learned from him these particulars. As for my poor friend Herz, his liberty became fatal to him, owing to an inexplicable succession of events. Having been sent by Marshal Augereau to Stralsund to perform a secret mission, he died there, suffocated by the fire of a brass stove in the room in which he slept. His secretary and his servant nearly fell victims to the same accident; but, more fortunate than he, their lives were saved. The Prince of Aremberg spoke to me of the death of M. Herz with real feeling; and it was easy to see that, prince as he was and allied to the Emperor, he entertained a most sincere friendship for his companion in captivity.

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## CHAPTER XXXI.

### MILITARY ANECDOTES.

I HAVE collected under the title of *Military Anecdotes* some facts which came to my knowledge while I accompanied the Emperor on his campaigns, and the authenticity of which I guarantee. I might have scattered them through my memoirs, and placed them in their proper periods; my not having done so is not owing to forgetfulness on my part, but because I thought that these incidents would have an added interest by being collected together, since in them we see the direct influence of the Emperor upon his soldiers, and thus can more easily form an exact idea of the manner in which his Majesty treated them, his consideration for them, and their attachment to his person.

During the autumn of 1804, between the time of the creation of the empire and the coronation of the Emperor, his Majesty made several journeys to the camp of Boulogne; and from this fact rumors arose that the expedition against England would soon set sail. In one of his frequent tours of inspection, the Emperor, stopping one day near the end of the camp on the left, spoke to a cannoneer from a guard ship, and while conversing with him, asked him several questions, among others, the following, "What is thought here of the Emperor?" — "That *sacré tondu* puts us out of breath as soon as he arrives. Each time he

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comes we have not a moment's repose while he is here. It might be thought he was enraged against those dogs of English who are always beating us, not much to our own credit."

"You believe in glory, then?" said the Emperor. The cannoneer then looked at him fixedly: "Somewhat, I think. Do you doubt it?" — "No, I do not doubt it, but — money, do you believe in that also?" — "Ah! what — I see — do you mean to insult me, you questioner? I know no other interest than that of the state." — "No, no, my brave soldier; I do not intend to insult you, but I bet that a twenty-franc piece would not be disagreeable to you in drinking a cup to my health." While speaking thus the Emperor had drawn a Napoleon from his pocket, which he presented to the cannoneer, whereupon the latter uttered a shout loud enough to be heard by the sentinel at the west post some distance off, and even threw himself on the Emperor, whom he took for a spy, and was about to seize him by the throat when the Emperor suddenly opened his gray overcoat and revealed his identity. The soldier's astonishment may be imagined! He prostrated himself at the feet of the Emperor, overcome with confusion at his mistake; but the latter, extending his hand, said, "Rise, my brave fellow, you have done your duty; but you will not keep your word, I am very sure; you will accept this piece, and drink to the health of the *sacré tondu*, will you not?" The Emperor then continued his rounds as if nothing had occurred.

Every one admits to-day that never, perhaps, has any man been gifted to the same degree as the Emperor with

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the art of addressing soldiers. He appreciated this talent highly in others; but it was not fine phrases which pleased him, and accordingly he held that a master-piece of this kind was the very short harangue of General Vandamme to the soldiers he commanded the day of the battle of Austerlitz. When day began to break General Vandamme said to the troops, "My brave fellows! There are the Russians! Load your pieces, pick your flints, put powder in the pan, fix bayonets, ready and — forward!" I remember one day the Emperor spoke of this oration before Marshal Berthier, who laughed at it. "That is like you," he said. "Well, all the advocates of Paris would not have said it so well; the soldier understands this, and that is the way battles are won."

When after the first campaign of Vienna, so happily terminated by the peace of Presburg, the Emperor was returning to Paris, many complaints reached him against the exactions of certain generals, notably General Vandamme. Complaint was made, amongst other grievances, that in the little village of Lantza this general had allowed himself five hundred florins per day, that is to say, eleven hundred and twenty-five francs, simply for the daily expenses of his table. It was on this occasion the Emperor said of him: "Pillages like a madman, but brave as Cæsar." Nevertheless, the Emperor, indignant at such exactions, and determined to put an end to them, summoned the general to Paris to reprimand him; but the latter, as soon as he entered the Emperor's presence, began to speak before his Majesty had time to address him, saying, "Sire, I know why you have summoned me; but as you know my devo-

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tion and my bravery I trust you will excuse some slight altercations as to the furnishing of my table, matters too petty, at any rate, to occupy your Majesty." The Emperor smiled at the oratorical skillfulness of General Vandamme, and contented himself with saying, "Well, well! say no more, but be more circumspect in future."

General Vandamme, happy to have escaped with so gentle an admonition, returned to Lantza to resume his command. He was indeed more circumspect than in the past; but he found and seized the occasion to revenge himself on the town for the compulsory self-denial the Emperor had imposed on him. On his arrival he found in the suburbs a large number of recruits who had come from Paris in his absence; and it occurred to him to make them all enter the town, alleging that it was indispensable they should be drilled under his own eyes. This was an enormous expense to the town, which would have been very willing to recall its complaints, and continue his expenses at the rate of five hundred florins per day.

The Emperor does not figure in the following anecdote. I will relate it, however, as a good instance of the manners and the astuteness of our soldiers on the campaign.

During the year 1806, a part of our troops having their quarters in Bavaria, a soldier of the fourth regiment of the line, named Varengo, was lodged at Indersdorff with a joiner. Varengo wished to compel his host to pay him two florins, or four livres ten sous, per day for his pleasures. He had no right to exact this. To succeed in making it to his interest to comply, he set himself to make a continual racket in the house. The poor carpenter, not being able to endure it longer, resolved to complain, but thought it pru-

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dent not to carry his complaints to the officers of the company in which Varengo served. He knew by his own experience, at least by that of his neighbors, that these gentlemen were by no means accessible to complaints of this kind. He decided to address himself to the general commanding, and set out on the road to Augsburg, the chief place of the arrondissement.

On his arrival at the bureau of the town, he was met by the general, and began to submit to him an account of his misfortunes; but unfortunately the general did not know the German language, so he sent for his interpreter, told the carpenter to explain himself, and inquired of what he complained. Now, the general's interpreting secretary was a quartermaster who had been attached to the general's staff since the Peace of Presburg, and happened to be, as luck would have it, the first cousin of this Varengo against whom the complaint was made. Without hesitation the quartermaster, as soon as he heard his cousin's name, gave an entirely incorrect translation of the report, assuring the general that this peasant, although in very comfortable circumstances, disobeyed the order of the day, in refusing to furnish fresh meat for the brave soldier who lodged with him; and this was the origin of the disagreement on which the complaint was based, no other motive being alleged for demanding a change. The general was much irritated, and gave orders to his secretary to require the peasant, under severe penalties, to furnish fresh meat for his guest. The order was written; but instead of submitting it to the supervision of the general, the interpreting secretary wrote out at length that the carpenter should pay two florins per day to Varengo. The poor

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fellow, having read this in German, could not restrain a movement of anger, seeing which, the general, thinking he had resisted the order, ordered him out, threatening him with his riding-whip. Thus, thanks to his cousin, the interpreter, Varengo regularly received two florins per day, which enabled him to be one of the jolliest soldiers in his company.

The Emperor did not like duelling. He often pretended to be ignorant of duels; but when he had to admit his knowledge of one, loudly expressed his dissatisfaction. I recall in this connection two or three circumstances which I shall attempt to relate.

A short time after the foundation of the Empire, a duel occurred, which created much stir in Paris, on account of the rank of the two adversaries. The Emperor had just authorized the formation of the first foreign regiment which he wished to admit into the service of France, — the regiment of Aremberg. Notwithstanding the title of this corps, most of the officers who were admitted were French; and this was a good opening, discreetly made, for rich and titled young men, who, in purchasing companies by the authority of the minister of war, could thus pass more rapidly through the first grades. Among the officers of the Aremberg regiment, were M. Charles de Sainte-Croix, who had recently served in the ministry of foreign affairs, and a charming young man whom I saw often at Malmaison, M. de Mariolles, who was nearly related to the Empress Josephine. It seems that the same position had been promised both, and they resolved to settle the dispute by private combat. M. de Mariolles fell, and died

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on the spot, and his death created consternation among the ladies of the *salon* at Malmaison.

His family and relations united in making complaint to the Emperor, who was very indignant, and spoke of sending M. de Sainte-Croix to the Temple prison and having him tried for murder. He prudently concealed himself during the first outburst over this affair; and the police, who were put on his track, would have had much difficulty in finding him, as he was especially protected by M. Fouché, who had recently re-entered the ministry, and was intimately connected with his mother, Madame de Sainte-Croix. Everything ended with the threats of his Majesty; since M. Fouché had remarked to him that by such unaccustomed severity the malevolent would not fail to say that he was performing less an act of sovereignty than one of personal vengeance, as the victim had the honor of being connected with himself.

The affair was thus suffered to drop; and I am here struck with the manner in which one recollection leads on to another, for I remember that in process of time the Emperor became much attached to M. de Sainte-Croix, whose advancement in the army was both brilliant and rapid; since, although he entered the service when twenty-two years of age, he was only twenty-eight when he was killed in Spain, being already then general of division.[1] I often saw M. de Sainte-Croix at the Emperor's headquarters. I think I see him still, — small, delicate, with an attractive countenance, and very little beard. He might have been taken for a young woman, rather than the brave young

[1] He is mentioned in terms of the highest praise in General Marbot's *Memoirs*. — TRANS.

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soldier he was; and, in fact, his features were so delicate, his cheeks so rosy, his blond hair curled in such natural ringlets, that when the Emperor was in a good humor he called him nothing but *Mademoiselle de Sainte-Croix!*

Another circumstance which I should not omit is a duel which took place at Burgos, in 1808, between General Franceschi, *aide-de-camp* to King Joseph, and Colonel Filangieri, colonel of his guard, both of whom were equerries of his Majesty. The subject of the quarrel was almost the same as that between M. de Mariolles and de Sainte-Croix; since both disputed for the position of first equerry to King Joseph, both maintaining that it had been promised them.

We had hardly been in the palace of Burgos five minutes when the Emperor was informed of this duel, which had taken place almost under the walls of the palace itself, and only a few hours before. The Emperor learned at the same time that General Franceschi had been killed, and on account of the difference in their rank, in order not to compromise military etiquette, they had fought in their uniforms of equerry. The Emperor was struck with the fact that the first news he received was bad news; and with his ideas of fatality, this really excited a great influence over him. He gave orders to have Colonel Filangieri found and brought to him, and he came in a few moments. I did not see him, as I was in another apartment; but the Emperor spoke to him in so loud and sharp a tone that I heard distinctly all he said. "Duels! duels! always duels!" cried the Emperor. "I will not allow it. I will punish it! You know how I abhor them!"—"Sire, have me tried if you will, but hear me."—"What can you have to say to me, you *crater of Vesuvius?* I have already pardoned your affair with Saint

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Simon;[1] I will not do the like again. Moreover, I cannot, at the very beginning of the campaign, when all should be thoroughly united! It produces a most unfortunate effect!" Here the Emperor kept silence a moment; then he resumed, although in a somewhat sharper tone: "Yes! you have a head of Vesuvius. See what a fine condition of affairs! I arrive and find blood in my palace!" After another pause, and in a somewhat calmer tone: "See what you have done! Joseph needs good officers; and here you have deprived him of two by a single blow,—Franceschi, whom you have killed, and yourself, who can no longer remain in his service." Here the Emperor was silent for some moments, and then added: "Now retire, leave! Give yourself up as a prisoner at the citadel of Turin. There await my orders, or rather place yourself in Murat's hands; he will know what to do with you; he also has Vesuvius in his head, and he will give you a warm welcome. Now take yourself off at once."

Colonel Filangieri needed no urging, I think, to hasten the execution of the Emperor's orders. I do not know the conclusion of this adventure; but I do know that the affair affected his Majesty deeply, for that evening when I was undressing him he repeated several times, "Duels! What a disgraceful thing! It is the kind of courage cannibals have!" If, moreover, the Emperor's anger was softened on this occasion, it was on account of his affection for young Filangieri; at first on account of his father, whom the Emperor highly esteemed, and also, because the young man

[1] M. Filangieri had, in fact, previously at Paris fought a duel with M. de Saint Simon, who was at first thought to be killed, but at last recovered from the dangerous wound he had received. — CONSTANT.

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having been educated at his expense, at the French Prytanée, he regarded him as one of his children by adoption, especially since he knew that M. Filangieri, godson of the queen of Naples, had refused a regiment, which the latter had offered him while he was still only a simple lieutenant in the Consular Guard, and further, because he had not consented to become a Neapolitan again until a French prince had been called to the throne of Naples.

What remains to be said on the subject of duels under the Empire, and the Emperor's conduct regarding them which came to my knowledge, somewhat resembles the little piece which is played on the theater after a tragedy. I will now relate how it happened that the Emperor himself played the *rôle* of peacemaker between two sub-officers who were enamored of the same beauty.

When the French army occupied Vienna, some time after the battle of Austerlitz, two sub-officers belonging to the forty-sixth and fiftieth regiments of the line, having had a dispute, determined to fight a duel, and chose for the place of combat a spot situated at the extremity of a plain which adjoined the palace of Schoenbrunn, the Emperor's place of residence. Our two champions had already unsheathed and exchanged blows with their short swords, which happily each had warded off, when the Emperor happened to pass near them, accompanied by several generals. Their stupefaction at the sight of the Emperor may be imagined. Their arms fell, so to speak, from their hands.

The Emperor inquired the cause of their quarrel, and learned that a woman who granted her favors to both was the real motive, each of them desiring to have no rival.

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These two champions found by chance that they were known to one of the generals who accompanied his Majesty, and informed him that they were two brave soldiers of Marengo and Austerlitz, belonging to such and such regiments, whose names had already been put on the list for the Cross of Honor; whereupon the Emperor addressed them after this style: "My children, woman is capricious, as fortune is also; and since you are soldiers of Marengo and Austerlitz, you need to give no new proofs of your courage. Return to your corps, and be friends henceforth, like good knights." These two soldiers lost all desire to fight, and soon perceived that their august peacemaker had not forgotten them, as they promptly received the Cross of the Legion of Honor.

In the beginning of the campaign of Tilsit, the Emperor, being at Berlin, one day took a fancy to make an excursion on foot to the quarter where our soldiers in the public houses indulged in the pleasures of the dance. He saw a quartermaster of the cavalry of his guard walking with a coarse, rotund German woman, and amused himself listening to the gallant remarks made by this quartermaster to his beautiful companion. "Let us enjoy ourselves, my dear," said he; "it is the *tondu* who pays the musicians with the *kriches* of your sovereign. Let us take our own gait; long live joy! and forward" — "Not so fast," said the Emperor, approaching him. "Certainly it must always be forward, but wait till I sound the charge." The quartermaster turned and recognized the Emperor, and, without being at all disconcerted, put his hand to his shako, and said, "That is useless trouble. Your Majesty

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does not need to beat a drum to make us move." This repartee made the Emperor smile, and soon after gained epaulets for the sub-officer, who perhaps might have waited a long while except for this fancy of his Majesty. But, at all events, if chance sometimes contributed thus to the giving of rewards, they were never given until after he had ascertained that those on whom he bestowed them were worthy.

At Eylau provisions failed; for a week, the bread supply being exhausted, the soldiers fed themselves as they could. The evening before the first attack, the Emperor, who wished to examine everything himself, made a tour of the bivouacs, and reaching one where all the men were asleep, saw some potatoes cooking, took a fancy to eat them, and undertook to draw them out of the fire with the point of his sword. Instantly a soldier awoke, and seeing some one usurping part of his supper, "I say, you are not very ceremonious, eating our potatoes!" — "My comrade, I am so hungry that you must excuse me." — "Well, take one or two then, if that is the case; but get off." But as the Emperor made no haste in getting off, the soldier insisted more strongly, and soon a heated discussion arose between him and the Emperor. From words they were about to come to blows, when the Emperor thought it was time to make himself known. The soldier's confusion was indescribable. He had almost struck the Emperor. He threw himself at his Majesty's feet, begging his pardon, which was most readily granted. "It was I who was in the wrong," said the Emperor; "I was obstinate. I bear you no ill-will; rise and let your mind be at rest, both now and in the future."

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The Emperor, having made inquiries concerning this soldier, learned that he was a good fellow, and not unintelligent. On the next promotion he was made sub-lieutenant. It is impossible to give an idea of the effect of such occurrences on the army. They were a constant subject of conversation with the soldiers, and stimulated them inexpressibly. The one who enjoyed the greatest distinction in his company was he of whom it could be said: "The Emperor has spoken to him."

At the battle of Essling the brave General Daleim, commanding a division of the fourth corps, found himself during the hottest part of the action at a spot swept by the enemy's artillery. The Emperor, passing near him, said: "It is warm in your locality!"—"Yes, Sire; permit me to extinguish the fire."—"Go." This one word sufficed; in the twinkling of an eye the terrible battery was taken. In the evening the Emperor, seeing General Daleim, approached him, and said, "It seems you only had to blow on it." His Majesty alluded General Daleim's habit of incessant whistling.

Among the brave general officers around the Emperor, a few were not highly educated, though their other fine qualities recommended them; some were celebrated for other reasons than their military merit. Thus General Junot and General Fournier were known as the best pistol shots; General Lasellette was famous for his love of music, which he indulged to such an extent as to have a piano always in one of his baggage wagons. This general drank only water; but, on the contrary, it was very different

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with General Bisson. Who has not heard of the hardest drinker in all the army? One day the Emperor, meeting him at Berlin, said to him, "Well, Bisson, do you still drink much?"—"Moderately, Sire; not more than twenty-five bottles." This was, in fact, a great improvement, for he had more than once reached the number of forty without being made tipsy. Moreover, with General Bisson it was not a vice, but an imperious need. The Emperor knowing this, and being much attached to him, allowed him a pension of twelve thousand francs out of his privy purse, and gave him besides frequent presents.

Among the officers who were not very well educated, we may be permitted to mention General Gros; and the manner in which he was promoted to the grade of general proves this fact. But his bravery was equal to every proof, and he was a superb specimen of masculine beauty. The pen alone was an unaccustomed weapon to him, and he could hardly use it to sign his name; and it was said that he was not much more proficient in reading. Being colonel of the guard, he found himself one day alone at the Tuileries in an apartment where he waited until the Emperor could be seen. There he delighted himself with observing his image reflected in the glass, and readjusting his cravat; and the admiration he felt at his own image led him to converse aloud with himself or rather with his reflection. "Ah!" said he, "if you only knew *bachébachiques* (mathematics), such a man as you, with a soldier's heart like yours, ah! the Emperor would make you a general!"—"You are one," said the Emperor, striking him on the shoulder. His Majesty had entered the saloon without being heard, and had amused himself with listening to the

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conversation Colonel Gros had carried on with himself. Such were the circumstances of his promotion to the rank of general, and what is more to be a general in the guard.

I have now arrived at the end of my list of military anecdotes. I have just spoken of a general's promotion, and will close with the story of a simple drummer, but a drummer renowned throughout the army as a perfect buffoon, in fact, the famous *Rata*, to whom General Gros, as we shall see, was deeply attached.

The army marched on Lintz during the campaign of 1809. Rata, drummer of the grenadiers of the fourth regiment of the line, and famous as a buffoon, having learned that the guard was to pass, and that it was commanded by General Gros, desired to see this officer who had been his chief of battalion, and with whom he had formerly taken all sorts of liberties. Rata thereupon waxed his mustache, and went to salute the general, addressing him thus: "Ah, here you are, General. How are you?"—"Very well, indeed, Rata; and you?"—"Always well, but not so well as you, it seems to me. Since you are doing so *very* well, you no longer think of poor Rata; for if he did not come to see you, you would not even think of sending him a few sous to buy tobacco." While saying, "*You do so well*," Rata had quickly seized General Gros's hat, and put it on his head in place of his own. At this moment the Emperor passed, and seeing a drummer wearing the hat of a general of his guard, he could hardly believe his eyes. He spurred up his horse, and inquired the cause. General Gros then said, laughing, and in the frank speech he so often used even to the Emperor "It

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is a brave soldier from my old battalion, accustomed to play pranks to amuse his comrades. He is a brave fellow, Sire, and every inch a man, and I recommend him to your Majesty. Moreover, Sire, he can himself do more than a whole park of *artillery*. Come, Rata, give us a broadside, and no quarter." The Emperor listened, and observed almost stupefied what was passing under his very eyes, when Rata, in no wise intimidated by the presence of the Emperor, prepared to execute the general's order; then, sticking his finger in his mouth, he made a noise like first the whistling and then the bursting of a shell. The imitation was so perfect that the Emperor was compelled to laugh, and turning to General Gros, said, "Come, take this man this very evening into the guard, and remind me of him on the next occasion." In a short while Rata had the cross, which those who threw real shells at the enemy often had not; so largely does caprice enter into the destiny of men!

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# L'ENVOI.

(By the editor of the French edition of 1830.)

The life of any one who has played a distinguished part offers many points of view, the number of which increases in proportion to the influence he has wielded upon the movement of events. This has been greater in the case of Napoleon than of any other personage in history. The product of an era of convulsions, in all of whose changes he took part, and which he at last closed by subjecting all ideas under a rule, which at one time promised to be lasting, he, like Catiline, requires a Sallust; like Charlemagne, an Eginhard; and like Alexander, a Quintus Curtius. M. de Bourrienne has, indeed, after the manner of Commines, shown him to us undisguised in his political manipulations and in the private life of his Court. This is a great step towards a knowledge of his individuality, but it is not enough. It is in a thorough acquaintance with his private life that this disillusioned age will find the secret springs of the drama of his marvelous career. The great men of former ages were veiled from us by a cloud of prejudice which even the good sense of Plutarch scarcely penetrated. Our age, more analytical and freer from illusions, in the great man seeks to find the individual. It is by this searching test that the present puts aside all illusions, and that the future will seek to justify its judgments. In the council of state, the statesman is in his robe, on the

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battlefield the warrior is beneath his armor, but in his bed-chamber, in his undress, we find the *man*.

It has been said that *no man is a hero to his valet*. It would give wide latitude to a witty remark, which has become proverbial, to make it the epigraph of these memoirs. The valet of a hero by that very fact is something more than a valet. Amber is only earth, and Bologna stone only a piece of rock; but the first gives out the perfume of the rose, and the other flashes the rays of the sun. The character of a witness is dignified by the solemnity of the scene and the greatness of the actor. Even before reading the manuscript of M. Constant, we were strongly persuaded that impressions so unusual and so striking would raise him to the level of the occasion.

The reader can now judge of this for himself. These are the memoirs of M. Constant, — autographic memoirs of one still living, who has written them to preserve his recollections. It is the private history, the familiar life, the leisure moments, passed in undress, of Napoleon, which we now present to the public. It is Napoleon taken without a mask, deprived of his general's sword, the consular purple, the imperial crown, — Napoleon resting from council and from battle, forgetful of power and of conquest, Napoleon unbending himself, going to bed, sleeping the slumber of a common man, as if the world did not hang upon his dreams.

These are striking facts, so natural and of such simplicity, that though a biased judgment may, perhaps, exaggerate their character, and amplify their importance, they will furnish to an impartial and reflective mind a wealth of evidence far superior to the vain speculations of the imagi-

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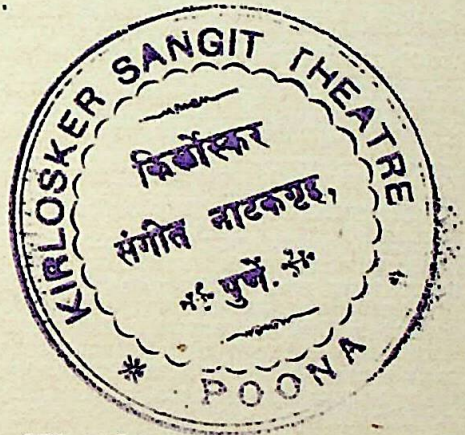
nation or the prejudiced judgments of political parties. In this light the author of these memoirs is not an author, but simply a narrator, who has seen more closely and intimately than any one else the Master of the West, who was for fifteen years his master also; and what he has written he has seen with his own eyes.

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